EARLY ENGLISH ADMINISTRATION

OF

BIHAR,

1781—1785.

By

J. REGINALD HAND,

Late Deputy Collector, Shahabad.

CALCUTTA:

PRINTED AT THE BENGAL SECRETARIAT PRESS.

1894.

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BENGAL SECRETARIA

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INTRODUCTION.

A FEW words of explanation seem desirable, regarding the inception and subsequent publication of this work.

In 1886, when I was stationed at Arrah, Moulvie Muhammad Raffi, the then head clerk of the English Department of the Collector's office at that station, informed me of the existence of certain ancient records, which he had unearthed in a lumber-room attached to his office. These papers he had carefully arranged and had rebound into volumes, which he had placed in the record-room of the English Department.

On examining these records I found they consisted of office copies of letters written to, and by, the revenue chief at Patna, during the years 1781 to 1786.

The information contained in these papers appeared to me so valuable and interesting, that I determined to prepare a concise description of the Administration of Bihar, during the years 1781 to 1785; the period for which I had examined the records.

To this end, I employed a clerk to copy and arrange the papers, with a view to compiling, at some future date, an official report, embodying the facts and figures obtained from them. It is almost needless to add, that my researches were conducted with the full knowledge and approval of my Commissioner, Mr. Hewitt; and of my Collector, Mr. Power; to whom I had shown one of the volumes in 1886-87.

Press of official duties, and bad health, prevented me from carrying out my intentions till the year 1888, when I was on sick leave. Finding time hanging heavily on me, during the rains, I readily accepted the invitation of Mr. Macdonald, the Editor of the *Englishman*, to write a popular sketch of the English Administration of Bihar in the years 1781—85. The present work was accordingly written for, and published in, the columns of that paper in 1888.

My continued ill-health, culminating in the loss of my sight in 1890, and my enforced retirement from the service in consequence,

prevented me from remodelling and publishing the work in an enlarged, and more technical, form.

In 1893, yielding to the wishes of my friends, I submitted the work in its original form to the Government of Bengal, with the view of ascertaining if it would care to publish the book at the expense of the State; and this was ultimately determined on by the Government.

I may state here, that while the facts contained in this work are strictly official and authentic; the opinions expressed therein; while discussing historical and economic questions, more or less of a controversial character; are entirely my own; and the reader must take them for what they are worth.

In conclusion I have to thank my clerk Babu Nilmoni Basu and the Reverend J. W. Cullen for their assistance in correcting the proof sheets: which task my blindness has rendered it impossible for me to accoomplish unaided.

J. R. II.

BHAGALPUR,
23*rd April* 1894.

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PREFACE.

In the record-room of the Arrah Collectorate there are a number of bulky ancient volumes of correspondence, dating from 1781, which belonged to the office of the Revenue chief of Patna. According to a tradition in the office they were discovered shortly after the Mutiny in the Buxar Fort, and brought to Arrah. Unfortunately the correspondence is not complete; but there is sufficient material available to form a fairly accurate opinion of the political and economic condition of the country in those early years of our administration; while a flood of light is thrown on the fiscal system which preceded the decennial settlement, which subsequently became permanent in 1793.

These papers show the unsatisfactory results arising on our first attempts to govern the country on semi-Asiatic principles; and it is only after a perusal of these papers, that one has anything like an adequate idea of the huge, though silent, revolution which, under the benign sway of the English Government, has converted a land of reckless lawlessness and chaotic misgovernment, into one of the most prosperous and peaceful countries in the world.

The student of history will find much interesting information, which he will seek for in vain elsewhere; the economist will mark the difference which a century of English rule has made in the value of local products; the administrator of the present time will learn something of the ancient customs, usages, and laws which prevailed in Bihar; and the general reader will, I trust, find matter sufficient both to interest and instruct him in what our forefathers did, said, and went through in building up this mighty Empire; in educing order out of chaos; and uniting into one harmonious system the discordant elements which distracted the social, political, and religious life of the people of India.

August 1888.

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EARLY ENGLISH ADMINISTRATION OF BIHAR, 1781—1785.

PART I.

HISTORICAL.

CHAPTER I.

A Retrospect.

THE years 1781—85, which embrace the first series of these papers, were probably the most important in the history of British Administration. Warren Hastings was placed at the head of the Indian Government in April 1772. His attempt at quinquennial farming of the revenue with zamindars having failed, the system of putting it up to public competition was attempted, and proved disastrous to the country. In 1774 the Supreme Council and the Supreme Court were established, and now commenced the administrative conflict between the Governor-General on the one side and his Council on the other; and between the executive and judicial authorities, which culminated in 1779 in the unseemly dispute over the Cossijura case, and the separation of the fiscal and civil administrations the following year.

This innovation did not, apparently, meet with the approval of the executive officers, and the first result, as proved from this correspondence, was a long-standing enmity between the officers of the *Dewani* and *Foujdari Adaluts* on one side, and the chief of Revenue on the other. This finally led to the amalgamation of the offices of *Foujdari* and Revenue, which exists to this day under the district administration of the Magistrate-Collector.

The year 1781-82 found the English Government of India at war with the French, Dutch, Maharattas, and Hyder Ali. Goddard's expedition to Poona had failed in the early part of the year. The Mahrattas were not quieted till the following year, when the treaty of Salbye was signed on the 17th May 1782. The defeat of Scindia by Colonel Carnac led to the treaty of peace with him on the 13th of October 1781. Bhonslay had been bribed into relinquishing the cause of the confederacy; Hyder had burst on the Carnatic in 1780, and in September

of that year had completely destroyed Baillie's forces and driven Munro's army in hot pursuit back to Madras. Arcot had surrendered, and Wandewash was only saved by the heroic defence of Flint. In June 1781 Coote was repulsed at Chillumbrum; but in July he defeated Hyder with signal loss at Porto-Novo. Then came the drawn battle of Polliton on the 27th of August, followed by the defeat of Hyder at Solingar on the 27th of September. Sir Hector Munro captured Negapatam from the Dutch in November 1781, and Trincomalee was wrested from them in January 1782. In this year Braithwaite's force was nearly exterminated on the banks of the Coleroon; and the French wrested Cuddalore from us, while Hyder seized Permacoil. The battle of Arnee on the 2nd of June was in favour of Tippoo.

Hughes and Suffrein had fought four naval actions without any decisive result; but Suffrein in August 1782 captured Trincomalee from the English. Colonel Humberstone's force was only saved on the Malabar coast by the death of Hyder that year. This short retrospect will help the reader to form an idea of the political atmosphere of India when the rebellion of Cheyt Singh, the Raja of Benares, in August 1781, was added to the troubles which Hastings was contending with. It will probably explain, partly, why Cheyt Singh thought the time opportune to aim at independence, and why the landed aristocracy of Bihar were prepared to espouse his cause. Fortunately, Hastings, though in imminent peril at Benares, never lost his head, and the officials of Bihar rose equal to the occasion.

CHAPTER II.

Seizure of the Dutch Factories.

The first political event of any consequence in Bihar in 1781 was the seizure of the Dutch Factory at Patna on the 10th of July by Major Hardy, commanding the Militia force. The factories of Chapra and Singhia were next seized. On the 4th of July the Governor-General and Council apprised Mr. Maxwell, the Revenue chief of Patna, of the seizure of the Dutch factory at Chinsurah, and of the appointment of Messrs. Puling, Heatly, Adair and Ramus "Commissionaries for the immediate charge of the treasures, effects and concern of the Dutch East India Company." A second letter of the same date informed him that the Officer Commanding the Patna Militia had been instructed to seize the factory at that city; and he was to take charge of the money, bullion, and effects found therein.

The higher officials of the factory were to be released on their parole, a form of which was sent; but the rest were "to be kept in close custody." From an advertisement dated the 6th of July, it appears that the servants

of the English Company were "accustomed to receive commissions for the provisions of the investment of the Dutch Company."

On the 10th of July Mr. Heatly was deputed to Patna to take charge of the factory there. From Major Alexander Hardy's letter it appears that the factory was delivered up to him at 7 P.M. on the 10th of July, and Mr. Maxwell, writing to the Governor-General and Council on the 13th idem, says Major Hardy made the factory over to him on the evening of the 11th. The Chief and two members of the Dutch Council were released on their parole, as also the Surgeon and two assistants; but six or seven other Europeans of a lower grade were committed to close custody. On the 5th of August, Mr. Maxwell made over charge of the factory to Mr. Heatly.

The Dutch factory received its opium from the English contractor, paying the English Company a nazarana of Rs. 10,000 per annum for this purpose. At the date of the seizure of the factory Mr. Campbell, the opium contractor, had a claim of Rs. 96,900 against the Dutch for opium supplied, which the English Government liquidated on the 29th of November 1781. Mr. Brooke, Revenue chief of Patna, was ordered to make the buildings of the Dutch factory over to the opium contractor for his use. It would, however, seem from a letter of the 23rd April 1786, from Mr. Brooke to Cornelius Vansittart, Chief of the Dutch East India Company, that the factory was restored to that Company again on the 8th of October 1784.

Enquiries were made by the Government as to whether the French had any possessions in Bihar, and it was informed that they had none.

CHAPTER III.

Cheyt Singh's Rebellion.

The next political event was the revolt of Cheyt Singh on the 16th of August 1781, at Benares, which led to serious troubles in Bihar.

It is known to the student of Indian history that the Bengal treasuries had been emptied to carry on the war in the South of India against the French, Dutch, Mahrattas, and Hyder Ali, and Hastings was in desperate straits for funds to carry on his military operations. At this time he bethought him of Cheyt Singh, the Raja of Benares, who had hoarded two crores of rupees, and was indebted to the English for his Raj and many subsequent favours. The family belonged to the clan of Bhuihars, and were intimately connected with the house of Tikari in Gya. Cheyt Singh's grandfather was an adventurer who started life as a petty landholder.

From the proclamation issued by the Governor-General on the 3rd of October 1781, it appears that in 1773, when Mr. Hastings settled the

Treaty of Benares with the *Vizier Nabob* Suja-ul-dowlah, "it was with the utmost difficulty and as a great favour that he obtained from the said *Vizier Nabob* the sunnad that constituted Cheyt Singh Raja of Benares When the late *Vizier* in 1776 ceded the zamindari of Benares to the Company, the rights held under the *Nabob*, his former Sovereign, by the Raja, were not only continued to him by the Governor of the Company, but new rights were conferred on him—rights which gave him extraordinary powers. These were the possession of the Fort at Jaunpur, the coinage of the Mint, and duties of the Cutwalli."

Cheyt Singh was not an independent Prince, but a feudal Chief or Baron, who derived his wealth and power from the paramount English Government. By the established custom of the country, he was liable to be called on for extraordinary military aid in times of national danger—a custom which was readily admitted and acted on during his own rebellion by the Rajas of Bhojepur and Charkiya, who raised and supported a body of troops during the military operations that followed his revolt.

Hastings called on Cheyt Singh to furnish a contingent of 2,000 horse, and to subscribe five lakhs of rupees towards the expenses of the war, which in its operations, to quote from the same proclamation, "kept the dominions of the Raja in peace and prosperity," though it was "very expensive to the Company." This demand Cheyt Singh refused to comply with. Hastings "hearing of his foolish attempts at independence, had trusted himself with a slender guard in Benares, hoping by his personal influence to recall the Raja to his duty, and get him to assist the Company in the present war" (*vide* proclamation).

Cheyt Singh met Warren Hastings on his entering his dominions, and was fined 50 lakhs for his "foolish attempt at independence." He offered to pay 20 lakhs, which was refused.

On the 15th of August, Hastings sent four companies of sepoys without ammunition to arrest Cheyt Singh in his house. The Raja's retainers, supported by a mob from the city, fell on the sepoys and massacred them and rescued the Raja, who fled across the river to Ramnagar and raised a force of 20,000 men to resist the English Government.

According to the same proclamation the Raja not only "attempted the life and cut off the followers" of the Governor-General on the 16th of August, but "has attempted by presents and promises to foment distrust and disaffection among the zamindars dependent upon the Company."

AFFAIRS IN BIHAR.

To understand the effect of this revolt in the contiguous province of Bihar, it is necessary to take a glance, not only at the events connected

with the war in the Peninsula, but at the condition of affairs in Bihar as disclosed by this correspondence.

The sudden death of Mr. Maxwell, the Revenue chief, early in August, placed Mr. Ross, the Senior Assistant, at the head of the executive administration of Patna, and nobly did this young man discharge the onerous duties that devolved on him. His jurisdiction extended over Patna, Shahabad, Gya, and Tirhut. Sircar Saran was under an independent Collector, Mr. Grome ; Bhagalpur and Monghyr were under Mr. Augustus Cleveland. Raja Kullyan Singh of Patna was the *Dewan* of the Company on a salary of Rs. 4,166 per mensem, and his official title was "Roy Royan of Subeh Bihar." From this correspondence he appears to have held the position of a feudal Baron-in-Chief. He exercised arbitrary powers over other zamindars, confining them and confiscating their estates at his own sweet pleasure. He treated the Revenue chief with contempt, refusing to obey his orders or to pay his revenue to him, and claimed, as an independent Chief, to be directly under the orders of the Governor-General.

His *Naib*, Raja Kyalliram or Khealiram, whose revenue amounted to several lakhs, had to be confined this year, first in his own house, and then in the Havilly Begum at Patna, for heavy and fraudulent arrears of revenue, and gross mismanagement of his estate.

Bikramajit Singh, the Raja of Bhojepur, had that year been practically ousted from his zamindari, which was placed in charge of a Government *Sazawal*, owing also to heavy arrears of revenue and gross mismanagement. He had a demand outstanding against Government for malikana.

Raja Narain Singh, the zamindar of Siris and Cutumba, had been imprisoned and ousted from his zamindary two years before. He had a claim against Government of Rs. 35,000 for malikana. Of this sum the Revenue chief admitted the claim for Rs. 27,700, but the Committee of Revenue rejected it *in toto*. Raja Akbar Ally of Nurhat and Samoy was under arrest at Patna, and smarting from ill-treatment received from the "Foujdar Currub Ali Khan" (Cuttub Ali Khan), Mitarjit Singh, the Raja of Ticcary, was placed under close arrest by order of Raja Kullyan Singh, who sent a sazawal to manage his estates. Raja Madhoo Singh of Tirhut was also confined by Kullyan Singh, and "sazawals" placed in charge of his estate.

The great banking firm of Ram Sow and Ram Saran Sow had failed and the partners were under arrest, as a bill of exchange drawn by them on their Calcutta house in favour of Government for Rs. 45,000 had been dishonoured.

Add to this the fact that all zamindars were liable to sudden confinement in the Havilly Begum, and to be dispossessed of their zamindaries for arrears of revenue, without any chance of being released until every farthing was paid up ; that they were liable to be turned out of their

estates for collecting tolls and abwabs, or owing to the prevalence of crime; that any foe could get a sheriff's officer to arrest them for a false claim, while dishonest sazawals fleeced them on the one hand, and the raiyats on the other, and we get a fairly accurate picture of the position of these so-called landed proprietors in 1781, when Cheyt Singh's rebellion broke out. That this is not an overdrawn picture I will prove hereafter from the records.

CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS.

Cheyt Singh's revolt burst suddenly on the officials of Bihar. Mr. Ross, writing to the Council at Calcutta on the 28th of August, says:—

"Since the revolt of Raja Cheyt Singh on the 16th instant, every communication by dák has been cut off from hence to Benares, and so well has he concerted measures that we can obtain no intelligence whatever from that quarter.

"It was the 24th before Major Eaton, commanding at Buxar, had the least intimation of the insurrection, with orders to detain the dáks, which was accordingly done, and Major Crawfurd ordered immediately to march with his regiment from Dinapore. He proceeded accordingly on the 22nd, and would reach Buxar on the 25th, from where he was to carry on the dáks which had been detained. Six or eight days have now elapsed without any accurate intelligence having been received from the Governor-General and Council of the party, but that of their being safe at Malwanty, a garden house in the neighbourhood of Benares, and some dubious intelligence of their having retired to the garrison of Chunargurh.

"I have hit upon every expedient for acquiring the most authentic intelligence in these parts, and learn daily from the boatmen and other natives in passing this place that the whole banks of the river, through the Raja's country, are lined with armed men, who board and fire upon all boats indiscriminately; that several Europeans have had very narrow escapes, some having got to Buxar, and Mr. Higgins, a merchant of this place, on his way up-country, had some difficulty in escaping hither.

"I have despatched private harcarahs by different routes to the following gentlemen at their respective stations:—Mr. Middleton at Lucknow; Colonel Hannay in the Gorruckpore country; Colonel James Morgan, commanding the Brigade at Cawnpore; and Captain Williams, bordering on the Bangah and Sircar Sarun districts, to apprise them of these events. In short, I have taken every precaution that human wisdom can devise.

"I have issued necessary orders to Major Alexander Hardy, commanding the Militia sepoys, to collect his people, as many as can be spared from the collections, wherever dispersed, in order to protect the city secure the treasure, the investment of piece-goods, opium, &c.,

manufacturing at present in the Dutch factory, and to suppress all tumult or any apparent disturbances that may happen by the disaffected in the city. These measures, having been taken as absolutely necessary, have been put into execution with the greatest secrecy and seeming indifference, to prevent any alarm or distrust from the natives of Patna."

Along with this letter is an extract from a private letter from Captain Nokes, commanding a battalion in Major Moses Crawfurd's regiment at Buxar, on its march to Benares, dated 25th August, 1781, addressed to Captain Haukesly Hall at Dinapore, which stated that people in "strange habits" had arrived that day from Chunar, with intelligence that the country between the Karamnassa river and Benares was lined with troops, against whom it would be madness to proceed with a force less than four battalions and as many guns. It then proceeds:

"They say that a few of the remaining companies of Popham's regiment, that was left at Mirzapore, had attempted to join the six that had returned to Chunar with Mr. Hastings, and had suffered an astonishing loss. They were unhappily intercepted in a narrow passage in some of the streets of that town, and were butchered in a most inhuman manner. Poor Captain Mayafee of the Artillery, who took six field pieces and two howitzers under his command, was furiously assaulted and his head cut off, which was carried about the town as a trophy. This unfortunate gentleman had also the company of Frenchmen that Sir Eyre Coote brought from Madras, consisting of one hundred strong, who were also miserably hacked to pieces, and only fourteen of them escaped to Chunar. About fifty or sixty men of Popham's four companies also escaped to that place. Poor Jonathan Scott, I find, is of the slain at the rescue of the Raja; and five poor fellows of the Artillery, officers I mean, killed and wounded with Captain Mayafee. To complete our misfortunes, our intelligence says that Captain Maxwell and his battalion are in great danger, as parties of men are lying in wait to intercept his passage at the ghats of the Gograk. In short, I very much fear that no assistance can arrive at Chunargurh from any place but Futtehgarh and Cawnpore. Major Eaton has commanded Crawfurd not to stir from here till more favourable accounts arrive. Lieutenant Adams and Mr. Perreaux fortunately made their escape from Gazipur in the night, and arrived here without molestation. A number of dandies of the Governor's fleet arrived here to-day, who give an account of several of their brethren being tied together and chucked in the river and drowned, and others cut to pieces."

DISAFFECTION IN BIHAR.

On the 29th of August Mr. Grome, the Collector of Saran, wrote to inform Mr. Ross that there were disaffected people in his division. "Reza Cooly Cawn, formerly the Aumil of Sasaram, is at this time

with Raja Cheyt Singh. Many of the inhabitants of that district, and particularly the Oojains, a tribe of Rajputs, are sincerely attached to him. Petambar Singh, of the family of the Ticcari Raja, is most intimately connected with Cheyt Singh, and his dependants are remarkably good soldiers. He has also a number of horsemen in his pay. A person whose name was formerly Boniad Singh, but afterwards changed it on becoming a Musulman, was seen by one who brought me the account, within seven *coss* of Ramnagore, on his way probably to Reza Cooly Cawn. This man belongs to Chynepur, and has with him 150 horses and 500 armed peons."

Mr. Ross replied to this letter on the 30th idem thus: "I have given the necessary orders to Major Hardy to seize and take up every person against whom we can obtain the least suspicion of being disaffected to the company's interest, and have this day taken into custody Hossain Ali Cawn, the renter of Arwal and Masowrah, who, from certain intelligence, has been employed as an emissary by Cheyt Singh in the city, making himself busy in propagating our late misfortunes. The other necessary measures have been taken respecting those persons whom you suspect." He adds that he has ordered Raja Kulyan Singh to "issue his orders to all his zamindars and dependants to assemble and join him." He also called in all the detached bodies of troops engaged in supporting the Revenue officers in Chynepur, and placed both the "Raja's rabble" and the mofussil troops under the command of Lieutenant Downes, to guard the frontier.

On the 2nd of September Mr. Ross reported that Major Baillee had marched from Dinapore with the 30th Regiment to form a junction with Mr. Crawfurd at Buxar; and that Captain Maxwell's battalion was expected to have reached the same place on the 29th ultimo. He adds: "Some flattering accounts have been received by the Collector of Sircar Saran from a bearer, who declared he left the brigade in motion with four regiments of sepoys from Cawnpore, on their march to Chunar; that Lieutenant-Colonel Hanay's corps was moving towards Cheyt Singh's country, and that Captain David Williams was also on his way from the Goruckpur district."

Writing on the 11th of September, from Camp Dildarnagar, Major Moses Crawfurd, commanding the 28th Regiment of sepoys, says: "We have been here since the 6th on which day I had formed a resolution—after the accounts of the Raja's forces at Ramnagar, which we are obliged to pass—to halt till I had received certain information from some of the Chunarians of the position of the enemy. On the 7th we had a letter from Popham, dated camp near Chunar, 5th, enjoining me to keep at a distance from Ramnagar till I should hear from him from that place; but as yet no other orders have come from him, though we expect them hourly to advance.

"From Popham's silence since his letter of the 5th I conclude that he has not stirred, nor indeed could he, from his post near Chunar, till the Cawnpore regiment or the Lucknow one joined him; and in that event only, he meant to facilitate my junction, which, I hope, now he has done, though I have not heard it is so.

"The roads on all quarters are stopped, and harcarahs going between this and Ramnagar can only travel in the night and conceal themselves in the day, and even then they are sometimes obliged to show a light pair of heels for their escape.

"You will have heard that Popham in a sally among the enemy some nights ago possessed himself of four of their guns, and that many of the Raja's followers are relinquishing his cause. This I had from Popham's harcarah. It is uncertain whether this will reach you, as it must pass through a very large jungle which is filled with a crowd of rascals who make a point of intercepting our correspondence as much as they can. I have just sent off a party to burn one of their villages in this neighbourhood, in terrorem to the rest. We have plenty of provisions of all sorts, and commonly get it for the trouble of taking it from deserted villages, or of those who are disaffected to us, which villages we always burn. Numbers of zamindars daily come in and claim our protection, to whom I give all the confidence and encouragement that lies in my power." On the 19th of September Mr. Ross forwarded Government the following extract from a letter dated 15th idem, from one of Mr. Moses Crawfurd's officers, to Mr. Boyd Alexander, Deputy Paymaster to the up-country garrison. It is dated from camp one mile above Zamaniah:—

"We are now advanced beyond Zamaniah, where we wait for Major James Crawfurd. Several parties of the Raja have been stationed at the different villages, but upon our approach have left their posts and run off. At the place where we now are, the day before we arrived, there were 400 camels of the Raja; but they were all gone before we got here; very unlucky for us. The cattle that are with us are the best ever known for drawing guns. They go with the greatest ease, faster than the regiment marches. Nothing but firing now all around us and people assembling upon all quarters, so that we shall soon be employed. A message by a harcarah this day from Chunar to the Babu of Budgepur (Bhojpur) says that Major Popham has been joined by two regiments from Cawnpore, so you will soon hear of us doing something. We shall have a noble detachment when Major James Crawfurd joins us, and we all march to join Major Popham."

From a letter dated the 6th of October, from Mr. Ross to Major Hardy, commanding the Patna Militia, it appears that one Fatteh Sah was giving trouble in Saran at this period, while several zamindars and others in the jurisdiction of the Revenue chief of Patna armed

and clothed their dependants in the military accoutrements of the Company. Major Hardy was, accordingly, directed to seize all people "so dressed in masquerade."

CHAPTER IV.

Rebellion of Narain Singh.

Major James Crawfurd's regiment marched at the end of August from Chitra, in order to effect a junction with Major Moses Crawfurd at Buxar. On his arrival at Shergatty he was directed by the Governor-General to take post in the vicinity of Bidjigurh, apparently in order to intercept Cheyt Singh's troops from Ramnagar. Narain Singh, the zamindar of Siris and Cutumba, who was at Aurangabad, was directed to provide boats to cross the river Sone. He, however, fled with his followers to Powie, where he had a fort. On Major Crawfurd's arrival at Manunpur in Churkiyah, Narain Singh with his followers fled to his fortress of Ramnagar at the foot of the hills. Major Crawfurd, changing his route from Shergatty, made for Rhotas; and marched *viâ* Buruah towards Ramnagar, where Narain Singh had collected a large body of matchlockmen to resist his progress. He did not, however, think it prudent to resist the troops here, and fled into the jungles of Nowar.

At Marabah he was joined by Bechu Singh, Cheyt Singh's *Fouzdar*, with a force estimated at 15,000 strong. The Argoor pass was occupied by Bechu Singh's force, and Narain Singh posted himself at the foot of that pass with 1,500 matchlockmen, intending to dispute the passage of the troops. Major Crawfurd, however, hearing of this arrangement, quitted the Argoor road and made for the Cowreah pass, which he occupied. Narain Singh, finding his position turned, sent his *Naib*, Mahommed Shah, with an apology and a nazzar of Rs. 100 and some goats to the Major, who refused to accept them. It was at Akbarpur that Major Crawfurd cut a road and dragged his guns up the Kymore plateau.

It does not appear from the correspondence that Major Crawfurd took any definite action to break up the rebel force in the Kymore hills. Apparently he pushed his way without molestation through the Cowreah pass over the hills to Bidjigurh. The next year, however, he received orders from Mr. Charters to seize the traitor. Marching from Ramgurh on the 6th March 1782, he arrived at Bolaunja and secured the passes of the hills and occupied the fords of the Sone. He then marched into Siris Cutumba. In his letter of the 25th of March 1782 to Mr. Charters, he says: "On my approach Raja Narain Singh fled to Goforolee, with an intention of escaping into the Rhotas

mountain; but hearing that a company of my sepoys was posted at Tilouthoo on the opposite bank of the river, he did not cross. On receiving information of his route, I sent the proper officers with the *Dustuk* you had transmitted me to arrest him; but he prevented their overtaking him by going straight to Patna and delivering himself up to Mr. Brooke."

The following is given by the *Aumil*, Kurrim Ali Khan, as the particulars of the private interview he had with Narain Singh when Mr. Charters sent Major Crawfurd to arrest him in 1782, on his failing to appear at Patna when summoned to surrender himself:—

"He came to me in private. I was alone; he had with him two or three people. He began to converse with me, saying 'You certainly have heard that Major Crawfurd has marched from Chitra. He has secured all the passes of the surrounding hills, and is encamped at Deogond, and has stationed troops at Tilouthoo and in the Rhotas district. It is not known what are the Major's intentions—if he is coming against me or going against any one else. Bahutali has certainly written to you about it.'"

"I denied it and told him I had no information whatever—nay I even took an oath.

"The Raja then said: 'I have no time to raise a large body of men.'

"I said: 'If you could collect men what would you do? There has been no one able to face the English that you could attempt it.'

"The Raja answered: 'I might have been killed!'

"I told him if he wished well of himself and his zamindari he would wait upon Major Crawfurd, who was coming, or that if he did not approve of that, he should in company with me appear before the Chief. The Raja acknowledged the propriety of this. He went to Powie and assembled 300 or 400 men and went towards the Beroolie jungles. He remained there three or four days, and I had no intelligence from him. His Naib, Mahomed Shah, in about two or three days represented to me that Major Crawfurd had arrived at Huseinabad and was marching towards Mollie; that the Raja's brother, Ram Singh, had gone to the Major, and that I likewise ought to go. I went there, and introduced Ram Singh to the Major, who asked me the particulars of the Raja's behaviour and situation, and I related to him as above. The Major sent Azimullah, with four or five horsemen, 20 peons, and two of Ram Singh's men, to the Raja, that he might either be brought to him or go to Patna. The Raja, on receiving intelligence of this, left the jungles of Beroolie before their arrival, and went towards Corona, without meeting Azimullah. He took neither the road to Tiocary, which was upon the right hand, or the road to Terak, on the left, but struck into the jungles and went to Powlie, from whence he proposed going to Patna."

In concluding my notice of this man's case I will note that it appears from the papers that in 1780 he assisted the rebellious zamindars of Palamau, Lagaud Roy and Gujlaj Roy.

Mr. Ross on the 10th October 1781 sums up the case against him thus:—"Raja Narain Singh (an arch traitor), who betrayed and showed every mark of disaffection to Major Crawfurd while our affairs bore an unfavourable aspect. He most subtlely evaded supplying the Major with boats to cross the Sone on his march from Chitra; and instead of joining and giving him the necessaries to expedite his march, he fled repeatedly before him, with a party of some hundred men, and showed not the least inclination to join in the support of the Company's interest. I shall therefore finish the character of this man by observing that he stands upon the records of the late Patna Council for his refractory behaviour in the years 1186-1187." F.S. It is due, however, to Narain Singh to state something of his side of the case.

From a letter, dated 20th April 1781, from Mr. Maxwell to the Committee of Revenue, it appears that in the month of Jeyt 1185, F.S., "Narain Singh, the zamindar of Siris Cutumba, falling in arrears of revenue, was sent up to Patna by the Council and confined; and a sazawal appointed to take charge of the parganas and collect the remaining kists; but on account of the Raja's confinement the raiyats and petty malguzars, from whom balances were due to him, absconded, and the *Sazawal* was able to collect only a very inconsiderable part; so that, at the close of the year, there remained a balance due to Government of Rs. 37,650-1-0. From that period the Raja has had no charge in the pargana. The malikana, therefore, which is due to him for the two last years, amounts, as per the enclosed account which I have the pleasure to transmit you, to Rs. 27,700-6."

In an arzee to Government, the Raja asserts that up to 1184 he paid up his revenue in full; but in 1185, when four months of the year remained unexpired, he was deprived of the management of his zamindari, and the Sazawal, Durgan Kooly Khan, placed in charge of the collections. He proceeds: "I immediately came to the Huzzoor to represent this, but several people there prevented my being attended to, so that I was sent to the Begum Havilly, and there confined. That year numbers of the raiyats and people sustaining great losses in the produce of their places absconded."

He concludes: "Permit me to request that I may receive credit for my malikana for 1186 and 1187; and as the parganas are taken from me, and I have no hopes left of ever being able to collect any further part of it, I humbly request you will be pleased to forgive me the remaining balance."

To this the Committee of Revenue replied through Mr. Duncan on the 27th of July 1781: "The Committee of Revenue having directed

me to communicate to Raja Narain Singh, the zamindar of Siris Cutumba, their decision on the claims set forth in his petition, which you lately transmitted to them, I cannot find that he has any vakil at the Presidency, and, therefore, beg the favour of you to acquaint him that the Committee do not think him entitled to any allowance on account of malikhana for the years 1186 and 1187, being debarred from it not only by the Hon'ble Board's General Regulation of the 4th of August 1778, but by his own refractory behaviour in the year 1186, when the zamindary was Amani; neither do they see any cause why he should have the balance of 1185 remitted to him; but this is a point the ultimate decision of which must rest with the Governor-General and Council."

Mr. Charters, in his letter to the Governor-General and Council, dated 27th May 1782, in reporting the arrest of Narain Singh, and in submitting the proofs against him, remarks: "I flatter myself the above papers will fully justify the arrest of Narain Singh, and though, perhaps, they do not carry a direct proof of acts which might affect the life of the zamindar, yet I apprehend they contain evidence of rebellion sufficient to disqualify him from again exercising the office of zamindar, or from acquiring a situation in which he can at any future period disturb the peace of that district which, though at present in perfect tranquillity, would again fall into confusion if Narain Singh received a footing in it.

"The proceedings of the late Provincial Council at Patna exhibit many instances of disobedience and refractory conduct of the zamindar who, possessing a hilly and jungly country, was always able to resist or evade any attempts to seize him, which in the present instance would have been equally impracticable, had not Major Crawfurd by a very judicious disposition of his regiment shut up every road and ghát on the river Sone by which he could have retreated, leaving only the alternative of surrendering to him or of delivering himself up at Patna, which last course he adopted. In addition to the above crimes against Government, Narain Singh stands accused of murder by one Byroo Singh, an inferior zamindar in Siris Cutumba, who has lodged his petition of complaint in the *Fauzdari* Court at Patna. The enclosure No. II is an application from the acting *Fauzdar* on the subject of this complaint, upon which you will be pleased to issue your orders." After suggesting the demolition of the forts which Narain Singh possessed, the letter proceeds: "The rebellious conduct which Narain Singh has been so long able to maintain, owing much to the frontier situation of the districts, and their vicinity to the hills affording a constant and secure retreat may, perhaps, suggest to the Hon'ble Board the propriety of discontinuing the office of zamindar in Siris Cutumba." I will conclude this account by stating that Raja Narain Singh was duly

prosecuted for rebellion and murder; but though the correspondence does not disclose the result, still, from the following letter, it appears he was sent a State prisoner to Dacca on the 5th of March 1786. To Major Alexander Hardy commanding at Patna:—

"The Committee of Revenue having thought proper to order the removal of Raja Narain Singh to Dacca, and Mr. Law having received directions from the gentlemen of the Committee to that effect, as you will see by the enclosed copy of Mr. Law's letter to me on the subject, I have to request that you will order a proper guard to escort the Raja to Dacca. You will be pleased to give the guard over to Gounesy *Harcarah*, who has the charge of Narain Singh, and who will attend him to the place of his destination." (Sd.) W. A. Brooke, Revenue Chief.

CHAPTER V.

Our Faithful Allies.

As a pleasing contrast to the disloyalty of Narain Singh was the staunch fidelity of Raja Chattarpatty Singh and his son Futteh Narain Singh of Churkiyah. I cannot do better than quote Major James Crawfurd's letter on the subject, addressed to Mr. Ross, dated camp west of Rhotasghur, September 22nd, 1781:—

"In a former letter I mentioned to you the good behaviour of Chattarpatty Singh, Raja of Churkiyah, as a contrast to Narain Singh. His only son is still with me, and shows much zeal for the public service, having brought upwards of 200 followers, which he supports entirely at his own charge. I, therefore, judge it highly proper that some public mark of favour should be conferred on the family, as an encouragement to such zamindars as are steady at their duty, and the zeal which you have on the present occasion manifested for the public weal induces me to address you, being confident that my application will meet with real attention, and not be treated lightly, as has sometimes happened to me, when I have ventured to make requests of the present kind. On enquiry I find that Raja Kheally Ram has unjustly deprived Raja Chattarpatty Singh of his malikana, mouzas Tar and Matafar, with half of the *Sair-Ganjeat Kutshi Tussel* for the year 1188 Fasli. The request, therefore, that I make is that you use your influence with him to restore them immediately. He can have no just plea for withholding them, as Chattarpatty Singh has received them for several years, and Kyaliram himself allowed them in 1187. I hope you will on receipt of this expedite the Raja's orders to Mullick Golam Gouse, his naib in Churkiyah, to have them restored, as I am assured it

will have a very beneficial effect in the present times. I have directed the bearer to wait your answer."

In a subsequent letter to Mr. Charters, Major James Crawfurd writes: "When I marched against Cheyt Singh in the end of last August, Chattarpatty Singh, the Raja of Churkiyah, came to me as I passed his district, and proposed to accompany me on the expedition with his followers, amounting to about 600 men; but as he is corpulent and advanced in years, I objected thereto, on which he sent his only son, Futteh Narain Singh, and 300 of the best of his matchlockmen, and they continued with me during the whole of the service. The sickness which operated so severely on my own troops was still more fatal to these people; scarcely one of them escaped the effects of it, and about 27 died. The young man himself was in imminent danger for several days; yet notwithstanding my earnest request to him to remove to a more salubrious situation, he would not leave me. This behaviour was the more meritorious, as all the neighbouring Rajas manifested their disaffection at that time; and Narain Singh, whose country adjoins to Churkiyah, had actually assembled a considerable force to resist me. I therefore, think it may be of public utility to confer some reward on this family for their conspicuous attachment to Government; and as I am informed they were formerly possessed of *Nankar* lands to the value of about Rs. 700 per year, I beg leave to recommend that they may be restored to them, if, on examining the public records, their claim should appear to be well founded."

It is satisfactory to learn from the papers that Government restored to the Churkiyah family all the *Nankar* villages they had held prior to 1172 F.S. (1774 A.D.). As a special mark of favour Futteh Narain also received a *Khillut* valued at Rs. 500, and the present of an elephant.

CHAPTER VI.

Raja Akbar Ali's Rebellion.

Another traitor to the Government at this period was Raja Akbar Ali Khan of Nurhat and Samoy. This man was also in heavy arrears, and confined at Patna. On Cheyt Singh's rebellion breaking out he made his escape from Patna, and, going to Narhat Samoy, raised a body of 4,000 or 5,000 matchlockmen, and commenced plundering the country.

On the 13th of October 1781, Ensign Downes of the Militia was sent to quell the insurrection and capture the rebel; but he speedily found his force, of one company, insufficient for the purpose, as the Raja had taken up a strong position in the Gumeah Pass to resist the advance of the troops. Mr. Brooke, who had relieved Mr. Ross, applied on the

13th of October to Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Ahmuty, Commanding at Dinapore, for reinforcements in support of Ensign Downes. Captain Powel was accordingly despatched with two companies of soldiers from Dinapore. On the 21st of October he effected a junction with Ensign Downes' force at Bagsuti Ghât. He found the enemy strongly posted at the entrance to the Pass, across which they had thrown up a couple of breastworks. The enemy had two Ganjial pieces with them.

On the morning of the 22nd of October Captain Powel attacked the enemy, having by a dexterous night march turned their flank and occupied a hill which commanded their position. The rebel was driven out of the pass with signal loss, and chased into the Kharackpur hills in the jurisdiction of Mr. Cleveland, who was requested to seize him.

Apparently, the rebellion of Akbar Ali was condoned, for later records show him to have unsuccessfully tried to regain his estates, which had been confiscated.

The following extract from Captain Powel's letter to Mr. Brooke, dated 12th October 1781, shows Akbar Ali was driven to rebel by the persecution he suffered from the high-handedness of the Fauzdar Currub Ali Khan: "I have had a letter from the Raja. He says that he is ready to come in and go to Patna with me, provided Currub Ali Cawn is dismissed from the office he at present holds. In my opinion, from what I learn from different zamindars, the boy has been ill-treated by him, and after the persecution he has met with from the *Fouzdar* he cannot be blamed for making this escape. Currub Ali Cawn stands very low in the estimation of every man I have conversed with in this part of the country, and all condemn his behaviour towards the Raja."

FEUDAL CHIEFS.

As a set-off to Raja Akbar Ali's case we have that of Bikramajit Singh, the Raja of Bhojepur, and his relative Bhup Narain of Jugdispur, both of whom raised and equipped a body of troops and marched with Major Moses Crawfurd against Cheyt Singh. I will let the official documents speak for themselves.

Letter from Major Isaac Eaton, dated Buxar, September 9, 1781: "I delivered the purwana which you sent me to Raja Bikramajit Singh, who was then with me. In consequence he sent orders to his naib and the different jamadars to supply me with grain, &c., but they are not so expeditious as I could wish; it comes in but slowly. He, however, expresses himself warmly in favour of our cause, and as a proof of his zeal, has sent 500 matchlockmen with Major Crawfurd, under the command of his brother. He has also left another brother with me and 100 men to obey any orders I may give him." Writing on the 15th of September, Major Eaton says: "In consequence of the information I had from Halwan Singh, *Naib* or *Fouzdar* of Arrah, that Babu Bhoop

Narain Singh had raised 1,600 men at Jagdispur in order to obstruct the collections, I addressed you yesterday by the hands of Bowan Singh *Naib* to Bakramajit Singh; but Babu Bhup Narain Singh having come to me yesterday evening with the few men he had collected, I recollected that he had some time ago written me, expressing his desire to raise men for the assistance of Government, and that he was very desirous to join the Governor at Benares. He is now so far on his way. I have this morning made the strictest enquiry respecting his having interfered with the Company's peons, and find it entirely without foundation; on the contrary, he seems more attached to our cause than any other person in the district."

Three-quarters of a century later we find Kuar Singh, the son of Bhup Narain Singh's first cousin, Sahazada Singh, in arms against the British Government, and heading the Dinapore mutineers. Nevertheless there was no more popular landlord in Bihar than Kuar Singh, and to this day his memory is cherished by the people with the sincerest regret; while many princely works of public utility remain as memorials of his public spirit and generosity. There never was a case to equal his in which an enlightened and faithful Prince was, by sheer mistrust of the chief-executive authority of a province, driven to revolt. Of all the leaders of the mutiny, Kuar Singh was the only one who showed the least ability as a general without resorting to unfair tactics or being guilty of mean treachery or cruelty. True, he twice annihilated the troops that were sent after him by entrapping them in ambuscades, but the tactics he employed were perfectly fair in war.

CHAPTER VII.

Disloyal Renters.

In 1781 the Governor-General settled the whole of Subeh Bihar with Maharaja Kullian Singh of Patna who, as I have said before, was the Dewan of the Company at Patna, and had the title of Roy Royan. Similarly, in April of that year Raja Kyalliram (Kheali Ram) of Benares was appointed Naib to Raja Kullian Singh, and had a sub-lease of Siris, Cutumba, Chaynepur, Sasaram, &c. It appears from a letter dated 1st June, from the Committee of Revenue to Mr. Maxwell, the Revenue chief, that Raja Kullian Singh fell in arrears, at that date, to the amount of Rs. 20,543. The Raja was called on to discharge his debt forthwith, or "coercive measures" would be adopted "for forcing payment of the arrears due from him." Owing to the political state of the country, however, no coercive measures were adopted, as Kullian Singh was the most powerful zamindar in Bihar.

When Cheyt Singh's rebellion broke out, both Rajas Kullian Singh and Kheali Ram petitioned Government to be allowed to raise a body of troops to take the field against the rebel.

So great, however, was the distrust of these men at the time, that Mr. Ross, in forwarding their applications to the Governor-General at Chunargarh on the 30th of August, remarked of Raja Kullian Singh "The Raja owes considerable balances to Government, which I am under great apprehensions he never will be able to fulfill, and am thoroughly convinced, from his own officiousness, that he means to avail himself of this opportunity of getting rid of his obligations to Government, by raising a rabble and plundering the country and charging it to the disaffected of Cheyt Singh." Later on he writes (21st September 1781) to the Committee of Revenue thus: "It is to get rid of the importunities of Kyalleram and Kullian Singh that I enclose you these *ursies*. They have for the past month been daily soliciting me for permission to raise a rabble of their own, and proceed to the frontier, as they say, to quell the disturbances in their respective districts, of which I can assure you at present there is not the least appearance, everything being very quiet to the westward, except in Sircar Sarun, where Futteh Sow has been induced, from the present aspect of things, to enter Husseypur; but Mr. Grome, the Collector of that district, has taken the most effectul measures to prevent him from penetrating any great length in that district. You will observe from the date of one of the accompanying *ursies* that I had for political reasons thought proper to suppress, for some time, transmitting these proposals of Kyalleram; that, however loyal and plausible they may appear to the Company's interest, and to you, I had my doubts of these men's real designs; believing that they meant to avail themselves of the present troubles in order to get rid of their obligations to Government by letting loose a rabble of their own; that they might plunder the country and afterwards declare it was done by the disaffected of Cheyt Singh.

"I hope you will pardon my suggestions of these men; but the great backwardness they show in paying up their balances gives me great reason to think that they secretly enjoy and have wished for these commotions. Being no longer able to evade their importunities without betraying my suspicions, I have hit upon this expedient in order to protract the time until our affairs wear a more pleasing aspect, which from the report of two *kurcorahs* arrived this morning from Lucknow, appears to be the case, as two regiments are arrived at Chunar, and our troops are fast assembling from all parts of the country, and I hope daily to hear of the total extirpation of Cheyt Singh and the disaffected to Government."

The balances of these men having subsequently become most alarming, they received severe censure from the Governor-General, and were

called on by the Committee of Revenue to pay up their arrears forthwith.

Mr. Brooke writes on the 10th of November 1781, thus: "I received a letter from Mr. Anderson some days ago, enclosing the letters from the Hon. Governor-General and Council for Kullian Singh and Kyalleram, expressing their disapprobation of their conduct in not paying up their balances. I am sorry to observe the little attention they pay to such orders; more particularly so, as I have every reason to believe that the last year's collections have long since been realized, notwithstanding their representations to the contrary; and I am convinced, from all the information I have been able to obtain, that this Province is vrey capable of answering the present year's settlements. I have used every argument to make them perform their engagement with Government, but without effect; and although I have told them that I have received positive orders to demand immediate payment of their balances, such is their confidence, that they have desired me to acquaint you with their proposals. Maharaja Kullian Singh promises to pay the balance due from him in four months, and says he can't do it in less time. Raja Kyalleram's proposals are still less favourable. Thus circumstanced I wait with the greatest impatience for your instructions, pointing out the mode you wish to be observed in order to enforce payment; for it appears to me they will not be brought to a proper sense of their duty, unless coercive measures are adopted, but of this you are the best judges; and I shall in the meantime do everything in my power to make them pay up the present year's kists."

CONFINEMENT OF RAJA KYALLERAM.

To this the Committee of Revenue replied on the 14th of November: "Under these circumstances we think it necessary to direct that, in addition to orders and remonstrances, some further measures should be adopted for securing what is due to the Company; and we think it expedient and proper to direct our attention particularly more to Raja Kyalleram, whose proposals you think less favourable than those of Maharaja Kullian Singh, and because he has not the same security in personal property to offer for the discharge of his debts to the Company.

"We direct, therefore, that you put him under personal restraint, in his own house or any other convenient place of security, and detain him there till he discharges his public debt, gives security for the payment of them in a short period, or till the receipt of our further orders upon this subject." On receipt of this Mr. Brooke applied to Major Hardy, commanding the Militia, on the 21st of November, to "send a Company of sepoys with proper ammunition, to surround his house, so as to prevent his escape."

The arrest of Kyalleram had a beneficial effect on Maharaja Kullian Singh, as will be apparent from the following letter, dated 24th November 1781, addressed to the Committee of Revenue by Mr. Brooke:—

"I have the pleasure to forward you a letter from Maharaja Kullian Singh, in which he tells me there are drafts for fifty thousand *Sunnat* rupees in part payment of his balance of last year. He has been much alarmed since Raja Kyalleram's confinement, and takes this mode of showing you that he is willing, and does all in his power, to pay up his balances, which he has already promised to do in three months, and which I believe he intends doing; but I think it necessary at the same time to acquaint you that he has not as yet paid his kist for Kartick." On the 1st of December 1781, Mr. Brooke forwarded bills of exchange, amounting to Rs. 49,203, which had been tendered by Raja Kullian Singh for the Kartic kist. The Committee of Revenue, however, in their letter of the 3rd of December, declined to receive these bills as they were drawn at a very long date, and added: "We desire you will communicate to Raja Kullian Singh our firm intention to effect the payment of the balance due from him, by means which from his rank and position we would not willingly use, if he does not immediately give satisfactory security and in all respects demean himself as a faithful renter of the Company." His stipend was also directed to be withheld.

On the 5th of December 1781, Mr. Brooke addressed the Committee of Revenue thus:—

"I have thus long deferred addressing you on the subject of Raja Kyalleram's confinement, in hopes that he would give me an opportunity of reporting favourably of him. I am sorry that he has disappointed me, and that his behaviour is such as to induce me to give credit to the various reports circulated to his prejudice. I hear from many that he has received advances from almost all the renters under him; and I have proof of his having demanded the whole year's rent from others: and that, notwithstanding the seeming bad terms he is on with his son Balgobind, that he has made over to him large sums of money, besides making considerable remittances to his house at Benares. I must confess myself very distrustful of this man, and shall be much concerned if he is continued in the management of the mahals at present under him; as he is extremely oppressive, and the sums he has collected in the mufassal have always been misapplied. It is my firm opinion that if he is ever set at large, he will collect all he can get and run off with the amount. After having thus fully given you my sentiments of Raja Kyalleram it is needless for me to add that some mode should be thought of, and that immediately, for the better management of the farms under him. Should it meet with your approbation, I shall willingly undertake to make a new settlement for this year, by which I shall at least ensure payment of the remaining kists.

"Inclosed is an *arzie* from Raja Kyalleram, which is a strong proof that my suspicions of him are not without foundation. He seems to have lost all sense of shame, and to have reconciled himself to the severest punishment that Government can inflict. He has had the assurance to offer me Bolonaut's pawts as a security for part of his balance for last year. This Bolonaut is a creature of his, not worth a rupee, and gave in pawts in my predecessor's time for upwards of Rs. 50,000, which have not to this day been realized, although Raja Kyalleram made himself responsible for them, and promised me six weeks ago to pay the amount within ten days."

On the 18th of December Mr. Brooke reported that Kyalleram had offered a security bond of Balgobind, a man of fortune, for Rs. 75,000, and the bonds of Mir Zurhkar Ally and Meer Golaum Mohuddy for Rs. 25,000 in liquidation in part of his balance, on condition he was released from confinement.

To this the Committee of Revenue replied on the 24th December of 1781 thus: "As we do not deem the security satisfactory, we direct that Kyalleram be not released from the restraint under which he at present is." On the 4th of January, 1782, Mr. Brooke addressed Major Hardy, commanding the Militia, thus:—

"It having been thought expedient to remove Raja Kyalleram from his house to a close and secure place of confinement, you will be pleased to receive him into the *Khilla*, and to furnish him with proper apartments. You will also give directions to the guard over him to allow him all necessaries of life. You will, of course, place such people over him as you may deem sufficient to prevent his escape."

On the 20th of January orders were issued to remove Kyalleram into the Havelly Begum, and his confinement was now to become more rigorous. "You will allow him one servant of his choice to attend on him, but will peremptorily prohibit any person supplying him with a hooka and betle, or similar indulgences to those he has hitherto enjoyed in the *Khilla*. You will also give orders to the officer of the guard to prevent any person having access to Raja Kyalleram without my particular permission."

At the same time it was ordered that all his effects were to be sold, including his house and palanquin.

On the 19th of April Mr. Charters, who was deputed to Bihar on special duty connected with the revenue administration of the province, ascertained a fraudulent transaction between Raja Kyalleram and one Sowdagar Mull, an agent of the house of Manick Chand Sow, a banker of Benares, the object of which was, under fictitious deeds, to withdraw moneys from the Company's province which he had collected from the districts he had formed. Mr. Brooke was accordingly directed to institute proceedings against both in the Dewany Adalut to disprove the validity of the deeds produced by the firm in question.

As Raja Kyalleram (Kheali Ram) still refused to liquidate the debt to Government, the Committee of Revenue, on the 29th of August 1782, directed Mr. Brooke to call on his two sons, Roy Balgobindo and Bukshiram, for payment; since "by an article of Hindu law the son is held responsible for the debts of his father whether they are contracted for a public or private account, unless full and satisfactory proof is exhibited of a legal separation of interest having taken place between them previous to the contract on which the debt is due." In case such a plea was raised of separation before the settlement of "certain districts in the Bihar, year 1188, or for the districts of Chaynepur Sasaram in the year 1186," Mr. Brooke was directed to investigate the plea and submit his proceedings to the Committee of Revenue; but meanwhile he was directed to place the two sons "under restraint of Mohassils." He was at the same time to attach all the lands held by Kyalleram in his province, of "the nature of Jaghire, Ultamgah, Sesschikon, &c." In the same letter appears the following paragraph:—"We do not mean to suspend the suit which is instituted in the Dewany Adalut respecting the mortgages which we consider only a mode by which the collusive and fraudulent transactions of the parties may be discovered, and in no degree to subscribe to the right which individuals may claim of mortgaging lands under the denomination of Jaghir, &c., without the sanction and authority of Government." It does not appear from the correspondence when Kyalleram was ultimately released from confinement, or if the debt was liquidated finally.

In regard to Kullian Singh the correspondence shows that in April 1782, the Committee decided that Raja Kullian Singh should in future pay his revenue to the Revenue chief, and not to the *Khalsa*, and in July of the same year it was decided to make the districts rented by him "Huzzoori" from the commencement of the Bihar year 1189.

CHAPTER VIII.

Conclusion of Cheyt Singh's Rebellion.

In closing the account of the rebellion of Cheyt Singh and the consequent troubles in Bihar, I will merely add that Cheyt Singh's forces were successively engaged by the English troops; and he fled first to Bidgigurh and then into Bundelcund, taking as much of his hoarded treasure with him as he could carry. When Bidgigurh surrendered on the 9th of November 1781, the troops obtained forty lakhs of booty, which they appropriated as prize-money. The conduct of Hastings in demanding a contingent of troops and five lakhs of rupees, when the tribute of the Raja had been fixed by contract, and the subsequent imposition of a heavy fine of fifty lakhs for refusal to comply with the demand, were among the chief heads of his subsequent indictment at the bar of the House of

Lords, and these proceedings have been generally considered a blot on his administration; but it must be remembered that the original demand was perfectly in accord with the institutions of the country, and not without precedent in the history of India. No doubt the fine of 50 lakhs was severe, but the offence which Cheyt Singh had committed would, under the Mahomedan Government, have cost him his life and raj both, and 50 lakhs from a disobedient and disloyal Baron "who foolishly aimed at independence," was not too severe, in view of the fact that he had hoarded two crores of rupees under favour of his Lord paramount.

Hastings never denied that the object of the fine was to make the punishment directly relieve the burdened and exhausted exchequer; but held that the fine, under all the circumstances of the case, was not unjustly harsh. By the irony of fate Hastings' design of making the Raja's fine afford the Company relief was frustrated by the military forces annexing the booty as prize-money, owing to an unguarded sentence in one of Hastings' letters to the Commander of the forces.

Cheyt Singh's nephew was subsequently installed in his place, and at this day the English Government has no more faithful and loyal dependent Chief in India than the present Raja, who is the descendant of the former rebel. Cheyt Singh obtained an asylum at Gwalior, where he died. It has been urged that Hastings could not have believed that Cheyt Singh was seriously disaffected, or he would never in that case have trusted himself at Benares with so slender an escort, but this argument loses its force in view of the fact that Hastings calculated more on the moral influence of his personal friendship bringing the Raja to his senses than physical coercion. He made a mistake which to this day is so common among Europeans in their dealings with natives. A native admits few friendships that do not lead to his personal benefit. When Hastings demanded troops and money, he ceased, according to native ideas, to be a friend, and he was promptly treated as a foe, all past favours being wiped out by this unfriendly act. In regard to the statement that Cheyt Singh did not contemplate revolting until his arrest brought about the sudden emeute which ended in the massacre of the troops sent to effect that object, I think these papers show convincingly that the Raja had prepared for this revolt.

Within a few days of the massacre, the people were raised *en masse*, and all the roads and communications were blocked. Within a few weeks, his emissaries had raised a conflagration from Allahabad to Monghyr. These facts, I think, clearly show that the revolt was a pre-arranged and organized one, though hastened by Hastings' extreme measures. No doubt Cheyt Singh pretended to desire a reconciliation, but his overtures for a pardon were backed by obstinate refusal to comply with the demands of the Governor-General, and intended more to gain time than to effect a reconciliation. Apparently Hastings

expected his conduct, in inflicting such a heavy fine, would meet with disapproval, and in the proclamation of the 3rd of October, 1781, it is noted that no attempt is made to justify that fine; but admitting its severity from an English point of view, the proclamation argued that it did not justify the base ingratitude of the Raja in raising the standard of revolt. The following passage from the proclamation gives the view of the Government on this point:—" It will be observed at the same time by our superiors that if the Governor-General had been even harsh and unjust in his conduct to Cheyt Singh, that Raja ought to have submitted peaceably, and to have awaited the justice of the Company, who have to the knowledge of all Indostan done more than justice to other Rajas whom they supposed to have been too severely punished by their servants, as in the case of the present Raja of Tanjore."

PART II.

ADMINISTRATIVE.

CHAPTER I.

Revenue Changes.

On the 9th of February 1781, the Revenue Administration was remodelled. The Provincial Councils were abolished, and the Committee of Revenue substituted for the Superintendent of the Khalsa Records.

On the 20th of February, Messrs. J. Shore, D. Anderson, Samuel, Charters, and Charles Croftes, entered on their duties as members of the Committee of Revenue. These duties were "the charge and administration of the public revenues" of the Bengal Province.

On the abolition of the Provincial Councils, the members took temporary charge of their respective divisions. Mr. William Maxwell became the Revenue Chief at Patna. Mr. Grome was appointed Collector of Sircar Saran; Mr. Augustus Cleveland Collector of Sircar Bhagalpur, and Mr. Chapman Collector of Ramgurh (Hazaribagh). The previous year Warren Hastings had separated the Courts of Fouzdari, Dewani, and Revenue. Under that arrangement Mr. Law was appointed Judge of the Dewani Adalut at Patna, Mr. John Perring became Judge at Maissery (?), and Mr. Champain Judge of Darbhanga. The affairs of Bihar were directly under the control of Warren Hastings, Richard Barwell, and Edward Wheeler. On the resignation of Mr. Barwell, Mr. Macpherson took his place at the Council Board in October 1781.

In 1782 Mr. Evelyn was added as a Provisional Member to the Committee of Revenue.

Mr. Fauke was Resident at Benares in 1781, but Mr. Markham succeeded him the following year. Mr. Croftes took up the duties of Accountant-General of the Revenue Department; but the Accountant-General of Bengal was a different person. Mr. Larkins held the latter post.

Mr. David Anderson was President of the Committee of Revenue.

Mr. Barlow was officiating "Fouzdar," *i.e.*, Magistrate of Patna.

Mr. Revel was Collector of Customs at Patna. It was this gentleman who established the mart in Chapra which still bears his name Revelgunge.

Mr. Maxwell exercised jurisdiction over Sircar Bihar, Sircar Shahabad, and Sircar Tirhut, including Havilly Azimabad (Patna) and Havilly Rhotas. The latter appears to have subsequently included the parganas of Serris Cutamba, Churkiyah, Sasaram, and Chaynepur, and called Sircar Rhotas. In 1782 Tirhut was formed into a separate Collectorship under Mr. Grand; and in 1784-85 Sircar Rhotas became a separate charge under Mr. Law as Officiating or Acting Collector.

In 1784 parganas Sandeh and Ballia were detached from Sircar Shahabad and placed under Mr. Bathurst, Superintendent of the "Huzzuri Mehals" (crown lands). The strip of country north of the Ganges, called Matfarcat Bihia, continued attached to the district of Shahabad, apparently until the Revenue Survey of 1844-45.

Mr. Maxwell having suddenly died, his senior assistant, Mr. Ross, took charge of the office of Revenue Chief on the 20th of August 1781; and he continued in charge till the 18th of October, when relieved by Mr. Brooke, who succeeded to the permanent office of Revenue chief. Mr. Brooke, on the date of his appointment, was the senior merchant in the Company's service at Calcutta, and it would appear he had to find security for the due discharge of his duties as Revenue chief. His pay was Rs. 1,200, and house allowance Rs. 300, total Rs. 1,500. This allowance he found very inadequate, and in a letter dated 29th November 1785, he represents his condition thus:—"The city of Patna from its situation on the Ganges and great road leading to our upper civil and military stations, is liable to become the constant resort of your servants in their progress to and from the Presidency. The house of the Chief has ever been, and still is on these occasions, considered the most proper place to repair to, and an attention to their conveniences, wants, and necessities, deemed inseparable from the duties of his station. In the city of Patna also, reside the representatives of three several nations, occupying stations in point of rank equal to my own, but of emoluments much superior; and our situations render a mutual exchange of civilities and friendly intercourse necessary and unavoidable."

He concludes thus:—"I do not solicit an additional allowance from any motive of increasing my fortune, but in order that I may support the dignity of my office with honour to my employers and credit to myself."

The Government was sensible of the inadequacy of his allowance, but in the then distressed state of the finances no increase could be granted; but he was informed that if his "attention to the revenue brought him under the description of those servants (Collectors) mentioned in a late regulation, the Committee would take the opportunity of rewarding him adequately." This was rather unsatisfactory, for, as he pointed out in his reply, he could hardly hope to come within the

terms of the regulation referred to, since within the five years that he had held the office of Revenue chief, three successive settlements of the revenue made by the members of the Committee deputed for the purpose, had resulted in an increase of the assessment, but a decrease in the collections.

He adds: "It must therefore be very evident to you, gentlemen that if the estimate formed by the Committee of Revenue has not hitherto been realized, the prospects of an increase are very improbable. The truth of this conclusion is more fully exemplified in the following instance. The Committee of Revenue have directed me to make the settlement of Sircar Shahabad, in consequence of the present Aumil under the last settlement falling in arrears and requesting permission to be relieved from his engagements. It cannot, therefore, be expected that the situation of this province will admit of an increase this year." He proposed, therefore, that either Maharaja Kullian Singh's allowance as Dewan should be curtailed, in order to raise his own pay, or that he might be allowed a percentage on the collections he made in Shahabad. He also strongly urged the necessity of making the criminal administration of the Division over to him, in order, as he says, "to infuse vigour into the collections, as has been done in Chittagong, Saran, Bhagalpur, Rangpur, Ramghur, Rhotas, Champaran, &c. By this means the great loss which the farmers under me have suffered hitherto by these offices being independent of the Revenue chief will be removed, and I shall then be able to make an advantageous settlement with perfect assurance of realizing the full amount."

It is to be noted that, though Mr. Brooke had the aid of the military, which he largely employed in coercing both farmers and raiyats, he still considered the police preferable as a means of subduing malguzars and raiyats who proved refractory.

Mr. Brooke's representation had the desired effect, and he virtually became the first Magistrate and Collector of Shahabad with complete control over both the revenue and executive-judicial administration of that district. He was also recommended for promotion in 1786.

ESTABLISHMENT CHARGES.

The following establishment was sanctioned for the office of Revenue Chief:—

Mr. Ross, Senior Assistant, Rs. 500. This officer twice acted as Revenue chief, once in 1781 and once in 1784.

Mr. Wordsworth, Junior Assistant, Rs. 400. This gentleman, Mr. Brooke complains in one of his letters, did not work three months in Patna within three years.

Mr. Brown, third Assistant, Rs. 300. All these were covenanted officers.

The Civil Surgeon received a salary of Rs. 300 and house allowance Rs. 150—total Rs. 450.

The ministerial staff consisted of three munshis at Rs. 65, one nazir, and two naib nazirs at Rs. 50; duftry, farash, &c., Rs. 24.

Ten peons Rs. 30, *i.e.*, Rs. 3 each.

One treasurer, Rs. 40; two muharrirs, Rs. 35.

One poddar, Rs. 10; two parakhias, Rs. 10.

I wonder what our modern amla would say to these allowances.

The general charges amounted to Rs. 265, including Rs. 100 for the peshkar of Shahabad. The contingent grant amounted to Rs. 150 per month.

There were two Opium Inspectors—Messrs. Walker and Mackenzie—each on Rs. 300 per mensem. Their establishments cost Rs. 158.

Under Law charges appear the names of four law officers whose salaries aggregated Rs. 450.

The zamindari charges, including pensions and stipends, amounted to Rs. 7,805 per mensem. This included the allowance of Maharaja Kullian Singh, the Dewan, of Rs. 4,166. His duties were to attach his signature to the jama kharach (cash-book) and other papers, and to attest the Persian accounts. Under "Stipends and Allowances" appear the names of twenty-six people, including Raja Basant Roy, who received Rs. 460 per mensem, but what for is not apparent.

The total expenditure of the revenue establishment was Rs. 11,613 per mensem, more than half being zamindari charges. The annual charges amounted to Rs. 1,39,361. This included, it should be remembered, the revenue charges of four districts, and nearly one-third was the pay of the Dewan. Nevertheless, one of the charges brought against Hastings subsequently was that he fixed enormous salaries for the servants of the Company.

CHAPTER II.

The Fiscal System. Zamindars.

It will be remembered that in 1772 Hastings attempted to get the zamindars to accept a five years' farm of the revenues of their districts, but the attempt failed, and a body of speculators called "renters" sprang up, who farmed the revenues by competition for five years. The old zamindars were supplanted by the new renters. They lost the fiscal control of their charges, but retained the office of zamindar, which carried with it responsible duties both executive and judicial. Most of the ancient houses retained the office of fauzdar, which gave them control over the rural police and jurisdiction in both civil and criminal cases. The kotwals, chowdhrys, fandidars, chaukidars, road patrols,

patrols of the passes into the hills, and other executive officers, were directly under their authority and paid by rent-free grants, which were excluded from the settlements. The zamindars themselves received an annuity of ten per cent. on the collections made by the renters, called malikana; and they were also allowed to take certain fees, called "dusturats," from holders of rent-free lands. In many cases they were allowed to retain and enjoy certain lands rent-free, as nankar, malikana, altamgah, &c. They, moreover, collected tolls and customs, had charge of the excise called "Koomar Mehal," and supervised the rent collections of the aumils. As their malikana depended on the accuracy of the aumils' and canoongoes' papers, it was to their interest to keep a sharp look out on the transactions of these gentlemen.

There can be little doubt that, under the Mohamedan Government, zamindars were not proprietors of estates, but collectors of the revenue. Like all Indian officers of State, however, the zamindar became an hereditary office holder, and in lapse of time he developed into a landed proprietor *de facto*, though not *de jure*. Doubtless, old Hindu rulers, such as the Raja of Bhojepur, the Raja of Ticcary, and similar Rajas in Bihar, were at an anti-Mohamedan period independent Chiefs, and as such, landed proprietors in the true sense; but when by conquest they lost their independence, they sank from the position of lords of the soil to that of custodians of the revenue under their conquerors. It was therefore that Hastings, in his dealings with the zamindars of Bengal and Bihar, treated them as rent collectors instead of landholders. While he had no compunction in ousting them from the management of their districts, he was careful to provide them with the necessary emoluments for the discharge of those official duties which devolved on them by virtue of their "office" of zamindar.

Throughout this correspondence we find the word zamindar applied almost exclusively in an official sense to those Barons or Chiefs who were public servants, such as fauzdars. Thus we find Mr. Charters proposed to abolish the "office" of zamindar in Siris and Cutumba, after the rebellion of Raja Narain Singh, who, we have seen, at that period had the management of no estate. Similarly we find Raja Bikramajit Singh ordered, in his capacity of Fauzdar of Bhojepur, to supply Mr. Eaton with provisions; while Maharaja Kullian Singh, in his capacity of "chief renter," sent similar instructions to the Raja, who was "aumil" or farmer of Bhojepur. In his capacity of Raja, renter, and fauzdar, he was both zamindar and farmer of Shahabad.

As the word zamindar was usually employed, in a quasi-official sense, for the "keeper of the land," who was a sort of hereditary Magistrate and Collector or Governor under the Muhammadan *régime*, and in time developed into a "Lord of the Manor" or "Seigneur," so the words "zamindari" and "proprietor" had also a restricted meaning in the

early official language of the English Administration. The following extract will, I think, make this clear; and also the position of the zamindars, not aumils, in their relation to aumils who were not zamindars. It appears that in July 1786 the Board of Revenue decided that the sale of "zamindaries" should, in future, be held in Calcutta. To this the aumils of Bihar, who were not zamindars, strongly objected, and the following memorial was submitted by them to the Board:—

"At this time orders arrived from the *huzoor* under date the 18th of July 1786, directing that the sale of zamindari lands for balances of revenue in the districts where the lands are situated is liable to certain objections, which will be removed by making the sales under their immediate inspection at the *Khalsa*; and giving notice that they have determined in future that all sales of zamindaries, &c., whether on account of balances due to Government or otherwise, shall be made at the *Khalsa* in Calcutta by the preparer of reports to the Revenue Department. Sir, it has been the custom in Subeh Beyhar for centuries past that aumils take *kabulyats* in the mufassal from the zamindars in preference to all other officers, knowing that the sale of the zamindari, if they fall in arrears, will pay up their balances. The zamindars and maliks, on hearing of this advertisement, will flatter themselves that their zamindaries will not be sold, and will, of course, make many objections, and find pretences enough, to put off the payment of their *kists*, while the Collector will not give us any time, but demand and insist on the payment of our *kists* as they become due to Government; and if we fall in arrears, our effects are seized and sold to pay up our balances.

"The gentlemen of the Board are masters of the country. If the sale of zamindaries in the different districts is not to be made by the Collector, we hope they will authorize them to suspend the amount from our *kists* of whatever balances on *kabulyats* and *wassool banki* accounts may be due to us in the mufassal from the zamindars, or that, according to custom, the sales may be made in the Collector's cutcherry in order to realize our outstanding balances."

Here we find the word "zamindari" denoting the Manor or Seigneurie of the zamindar, and not all the country they had the farm or sub-farm of under either Government or aumils. The Manor lands are generally called nankar, or free lands of the zamindars, which apparently they held not in fee simple, but fee conditional, as service lands, for we have seen by two preceding extracts that Government disputed the zamindars' right to mortgage such lands without the sanction of the Council. It was this Manor which was the real estate of the zamindar, and of which he was the proprietor. These lands are now known as "zerait," or "khas khamar" lands, and are found scattered in many villages; but in former times the manor lands were either a whole pargana, a taluk,

or a village; and they formed a compact estate, *within the fiscal charge of a zamindar.* It is important to note that the supersession of zamindars in the management of their charges dated from centuries before the advent of the English. The system under which Hastings administered the province was essentially a Muhammadan system, and had existed for centuries. He was therefore not responsible for its imperfections or disadvantages; nor did he in any way act in disregard of the rights of zamindars. When he quitted India he was the most popular Englishman among the Natives. In its popular sense of course the word "zamindari" meant all the land in the official charge of a zamindar.

CHAPTER III.

Revenue Farmers.

The quinquennial farm of the revenues expired in 1777, and as it had led to heavy defalcations by the renters, the Governor-General determined to introduce the system of yearly farms. Thus was intensified tenfold all the mischief which had grown up under the system of renters and aumils. The renters had no reason to improve the estates. It was uncertain if they would hold them next year, or even if they would have sufficient time to collect the current demand. They exacted as much as they could extort from cultivators in the shortest period of time, gave the best lands in the estates to their relatives and dependants at a nominal rent, and pocketted as much of the collections as they could safely withhold from Government. They knew they would be confined for arrears of their revenue, and they philosophically bore such degradation and discomfort under the knowledge that they had amassed a fortune which they could hereafter enjoy when Government got tired of supporting them free of charge in the apartments of the Havilly Begum. This was the state of things when, in 1781 Maharaja Kullian Singh of Patna took the settlement of Subeh Bihar from Warren Hastings at Calcutta for Rs. 29,21,107, against the previous year's settlement of Rs. 28,02,185. He proceeded to divide this settlement with Raja Khialiram or Kyalliram, who became his naib.

It is obvious that neither Maharaja Kullian Singh nor Raja Kyalliram was in a position to manage such a large extent of country. They were forced to let out the parganas to farmers or sub-renters called "aumils." In most cases the ancient families of zamindars secured the farms of their districts; but in many cases the aumils were strangers and speculators, with no local influence or prestige, and

utterly ignorant of the people and their rights. They collected the rents at the point of the sepoys' bayonets, wrangled with local zamindars on one hand and oppressed the raiyats on the other, while they invariably swindled Government out of its revenue.

It frequently happened that Government, finding the renter's aumil dishonest, appointed one of its own, with the result that a nest of hornets was immediately disturbed about the ears of the new-comer, who speedily retired, after leaving the revenue in a worse condition than before.

Under the aumils and renters, and between them and the cultivator, was another class of middlemen, called "malguzars," who appear to have been sub-farmers, and often creatures of the aumil intended to assist him in his peculations. From a return, dated 20th April 1782, it appears that the following were the Government aumils, or officers of revenue, also called farmers, in the estates confiscated from Raja Kyalliram:—

1. Syud Murtuza.—Sandeh and Ballia.
2. Raja Bikramajit Singh.—Sircar Shahabad, excluding certain parganas as below.
3. Babu Bhup Narain.—Parganas Piro, Nonore, and Powar in Sircar Shahabad.
4. Mustafa Cooly Khan.—Parganas Chaynepur and Sasaram, Sircar Shahabad.
5. Baburali Khan.—Siris Cutamba and Khagole.
6. Harbans Roy.—Havilly Rhotas.
7. Mahommed Yar Khan.—Nurhat and Samoy.
8. Alum Beg Khan.—Gidhore and Amertoo.
9. Mir Mahommed Banker.—Tillourah.
10. Ismail Cooly Khan.—Jagir lands.
11. Shahabaz Beg Khan.—Bishazari.
12. Nawab Munnural Dowla.—Baswank, Rampur, and Shahjahanpur.
13. Nawab Mozuffer Jung.—Kaber and Dadur.

DEFAULTING AUMILS.

Apparently Government held both renter and aumil responsible for the revenue. Kyalliram was renter, and as such confined for arrears of revenue. His aumil of Siris Cutamba and Charkiyah was Raja Narain Singh, who was also deposed and confined by Government. Thus also Bikramajit, the Raja of Bhojepur, was aumil of Sircar Shahabad, but deposed by Mr. Maxwell, reinstated by Mr. Brooke, and again deposed by him. The aumils of Chaynepur, Behea, &c., were also dismissed by Mr. Brooke, as will be seen further on. Though aumils were liable to be confined and their effects sold for arrears of revenue, they

nevertheless had the power of confining refractory raiyats and malguzars, and were even allowed sepoys to assist them in enforcing payment of the revenue. From a return dated 8th October 1781, it appears that 102 sepoys were posted at Sasaram to aid the Collectors, 11 were posted at Ticcary, 10 at Arrah, and 120 at Narhat and Samoy.

On the 3rd of July 1782, Mr. Brooke addressed the Officer Commanding a detachment on its march to Dinapore thus:—"Having occasion for sepoys to assist in collecting a large balance from the aumils of Sircar Shahabad, I am under the necessity of applying to you for a company of sepoys under the command of a subadar. I hope to return them to you in the course of fifteen days."

Again on the 15th of September 1782 he addressed Major Alexander Hardy, commanding the Patna Militia sepoys, thus:—

"The aumil of Chaynepur and Sasaram having frequently represented to me the impossibility of fulfilling his engagements with Government unless some sepoys are allowed to assist him in the collections, I think it necessary to comply with his request for the present. You will, therefore, be pleased to send a company of sepoys to Sasaram, and give particular orders to the subadar to render all proper assistance to the aumil when called upon." In October 1783, Mr. Brooke directed Major Hardy to send 20 sepoys to Sasaram Chaynepur, 12 to Rhotas, four to Surub Mahal, six to Sandeh Ballia, and two to Bessanbarpur. In March 1784 Mr. Brooke addressed the following letter to Major Hardy:—

"The aumil of Sircar Shahabad having represented to me that some of the zamindars of pargana Behea have refused to pay their kists, and have by force taken away all the crops, I am to request that you will send me six sepoys as soon as possible, that I might oblige the zamindars to settle their accounts with the aumil. I sent a dustuck with some harcarahs some time ago, but the zamindars have not paid the least attention to my orders, which is the cause of my present application for sepoys."

Not only were sepoys employed to arrest and confine defaulting farmers of the revenue, but a class of officers called "Mohassils" were largely employed for the same purpose; and indeed so illegally were they often employed, that the Judges of the Dewani Adalut at length represented the matter to the Governor-General, who issued the following orders on the 7th of June 1781:—"We disapprove in general of the practice alluded to of employing *Mohassils* in the collection of the revenue; but as cases may sometimes happen in which they may be found absolutely necessary to enforce the just demands of Government, we desire you will issue a circular order to the different Chiefs and Collectors holding authority under you, requiring them in all such cases to furnish the *Mohassils* with a writ or order under their seal

and signature, and you will also cause public notice to be given that any person acting without such warrant shall be liable to punishment on complaint made to any of the Judges of the Dewany Court." Subsequently on the 29th of June 1781, the Committee of Revenue informed Mr. Maxwell that the authority to employ *Mohassils* was allowed "all Chiefs or European Collectors, and all zamindars, talukdars, chowdhrys, farmers mutahads, aumils, sazawals, etmaundars, tahsildars and others employed in the collection of the revenue." The defaulters, however, invariably led the Revenue chief a long chase, by betaking themselves into new fields and pastures fresh, where the same game could be gone through under the ægis of a rival Collector.

The position of the "Aumils" will be made clear by a few extracts from the papers.

Extract from a *Tahud*:—

"Proposal for a Tahud for five years of the parganas Siris and Cutumba in the Sircar Rhotas, dependent on Subeh Behar, from the beginning of the year 1190 F.S. to the end of 1194 F.S., including the malikhana of Raja Narain Singh, which was granted to him by a Sanad from Raja Kyalliram, during his possession, without orders from the Council in 1188 F.S.

"Whatever moccurrarees, shesh chikon, or *bazé* 'zamin,' Raja Narain Singh or other *Aumils* shall have newly granted from the commencement of 1178 F.S. or given sunads for, I will likewise resume."

In a sanad granting Raja Rajbullub the jagir of pargana Nagarbassi appears the following clause:—"It is, therefore, necessary that he pay to his aumildar, or officer of revenue, all Dewanny dues, and that he do not depart or deviate from his advice and opinion; it being on the other hand requisite for the Aumil of the said Raja to act so that, by his good conduct, the raiyats do remain pleased and contented, exerting at the same time his best endeavours for the prosperity of the country and the increase of its revenue."

Let us see how these objects were fulfilled by the Aumils. Mr. Brooke, writing to the Committee of Revenue on the 11th of January 1783, says:—

"I think it necessary to observe that these parganas were in a very bad state of cultivation at the time of Raja Kyalliram's being dispossessed, greatly owing to the bad management of his Aumils, and the disturbances occasioned by Raja Akbar Ali in Nurhat Samoy, and by Raja Narain Singh in Siris Cutumba and Churkiya. It clearly appeared that Raja Kyalliram had given the management of these parganas to Narain Singh, and I leave you to judge of his conduct, when I inform you that the mofussil bundobust of Siris Cutumba alone amounted to Rs. 1,37,000, and as for Charkiya there was no bundobust made at

all, but it was held *Amany* by Raja Kyalliram's people, who deserted the country immediately they heard of Kyalliram's confinement; and when Narain Singh was apprehended in April last, his gumashtas, who had the management of all the small farms in Siris Cutumba, did everything in their power to prevent the Aumil, sent on the part of Government, collecting the kists regularly. This they did by low practices and cunning, so very natural to people of their caste."

Here is another picture. Writing to the Committee of Revenue on the 26th May 1782, Mr. Brooke says:—"I am sorry to inform you that the revenue of Shahabad is likely to fall short this year, but you may depend on my utmost endeavours to prevent it. The present farmers being, in my opinion, incapable of attending properly to such an extent of country, and being at the same time very obnoxious to the raiyats, I beg leave to recommend that the parganas Arrah, Behea, Budgepur, and Barragowah be let out to different farmers upon a lease of five years. If this mode meets with your approbation, I am confident that the full jama will be realized in future, but it is necessary you should determine soon, as this is the time of cultivation, and much depends on its being properly improved. I recommended the same plan for Nurhut Samoy in my address of the 17th instant, where it is equally expedient to be put in force, as I am apprehensive of a loss there. Charkiya and Siris Cutumba will also fall short, and I propose visiting these parganas about ten days hence in order to investigate the cause of the present failure, and to encourage the raiyats to cultivate for the ensuing season, of which I have not a doubt of realizing the full jama."

The reply was characteristic of the times: "For the purpose of obtaining a security to Government for such balance as may arise, we direct you will immediately attach the nankar and such other free lands as the zamindars may be possessed of, and collect the rents of the same without paying any regard to any mortgage which may have been executed by the zamindars; unless in any instance where the mortgage may be authorized by Government, and in such instances occurring, we desire you will inform us of it, which is a rule we desire you will observe in all the districts under your charge. If any proposals are made to you for farming Shahabad either in whole or in divisions we desire you will transmit them to us, accompanied with your opinion of the responsibility of such persons as offer to become renters."

On the 8th of October 1782, after visiting Shahabad, Mr. Brooke reported:—

"I arrived at Arrah on the 30th June, and, although it was the season for cultivation, I observed that many of the villages were deserted, and not a plough was to be seen, owing to the oppression of Raja Bikramajit and the *Dewan* and *Zilladars* employed by Babu

Bhup Narain. The raiyats were very loud in their complaints, and, I am sorry to say it, not without reason. I endeavoured to pacify them as much as possible, but they were determined not to enter into engagements with Bikramajit and Bhup Narain. Finding them thus obstinate, and that Bikramajit and Bhup Narain's people were very obnoxious to the raiyats, I was under the necessity of dispossessing Bikramajit of parganas Budgepur (Bhojpur), Dinwar, Dinnarah, and Taluq Behea; and Bhup Narain of parganas Arrah, Barragowan, Matfurcat Behea, and part of Budgepur. The petty farmers and raiyats were highly pleased at this, and I had the pleasure to see the raiyats return to their villages and to the cultivation of their grounds" It appears from this letter that parganas Piro, Nanore, and Powar were continued in the possession of Bhup Narain. Parganas Dinwar, Dinnarah, and Behea were proposed to be let in farm; and Bhojpur, Arrah, Matfarcat Behea, and Barragowan were made "amany," *i.e.*, kept under direct management.

The following extract from Mr. Brooke's letter to the Committee of Revenue, dated the 11th of January 1783, will be interesting:—

"I cannot say whether the circumstance was known to you, but in your letter of the 31st of September 1781, you directed me to keep Bikramajit in possession, in consequence of which I sent for the Raja and acquainted him with your orders; he candidly confessed to me that he had lost so much the preceding year, that he wished only to hold that part of Shahabad of which he was zamindar; but recommended his relation, Babu Bhup Narain, for the remainder, saying that he had a considerable sum due him from Government for malikhana. It being absolutely necessary to farm these parganas without loss of time, I made enquiry and found that Bhup Narain Singh had a just claim for malikhana. Deeming it, therefore, a sufficient security, I put him in possession of parganas Arrah, &c. The Hon'ble Board having since thought proper to allow him malikhana, the amount will be placed to his credit, and then his balance will be trifling; and if he is indulged with an allowance for the expenses he was at during the troubles at Benares, for the force he kept in his pay, and for his fidelity towards Government, his balance will be made up. Such sums as he can prove to have advanced as tuccavy, or other balance that may be justly due him, from his under-renters, will shortly be collected and carried to credit of his account."

Writing on the 17th of February 1783 to the Committee of Revenue, Mr. Brooke says:—

"I have the pleasure to enclose you two *arzies* from Raja Bikramajit Singh, Zamindar of Sircar Shahabad, claiming an allowance for malikhana and for extra expenses incurred during the troubles at Benares.

I beg leave to observe that any allowance you may be pleased to grant

Raja Bikramajit Singh will be carried to his credit on account of the heavy balance he owes Government on account of the years 1188 and 1189. Raja Bikramajit is in such indigent circumstances that I would recommend the balance he owes to Government be excused him, and that some small allowance be granted him yearly for his future subsistence. I recommend this mode because I am certain he has not the means of paying off the debt he owes to Government; and as the remission of his heavy balance will be considered by all other zamindars a very handsome reward for his services, it will be the means of attaching them more firmly to us. I think it necessary at the same time to point out to you that the Raja ought never to be entrusted with the management of a farm, as he is very incapable of the charge, of which I was an eye-witness in Shahabad last year."

THE CASE OF HANUMAN SINGH.

Early in March 1783, Mr. Brooke had again to visit Arrah, as the district again fell in arrears, and loud complaints were made against the conduct of the "amany or Government aumils" of Arrah and Barragowan. I think it will be best to quote his report *in extenso* instead of abridging it, even at the risk of being charged with prolixity:—

"I informed you in my letter of the 9th instant of my being at this place (Arrah), in order to investigate the conduct of the *Amany Aumils*, and at the same time to judge of the probable loss that has occurred for want of rain in the proper season. Immediately on my arrival, I called upon Hanuman Singh, *Aumil* of parganas Arrah and Barragowan, for his account, bundobust, and kistbundy for the present year, and was greatly astonished when he replied that neither was finished as he has had the management ever since last August. Thus situated, I thought it necessary to set about forming the bundobust, and for that purpose ordered him to summon the principal malguzars. Far from attending to the orders he received, he advised the mulguzars, with whom it seems he had entered into private engagements, to abscond, meaning by this *finesse* to prevent my coming to a knowledge of the tricks he had been practising. I was, therefore, under the necessity of sending amins to form an estimate of the produce of the different taluks, and have with a great deal of trouble effected a bundobust agreeably to the jaydad."

Having positive proof of Hanuman Singh's bad conduct as above represented, I have thought it expedient to remove him, and have appointed Meer Sultan Hyder in his room, as it would have been the height of imprudence to trust Hanuman Singh with the management of these parganas after my absence, when he had the insolence to play so many tricks under my own eyes.

"Although it is the custom in this pargana to collect at least 10 annas of the jama before the end of Faughan, he has not to this day realized six annas, having only paid into the treasury Rs. 40,000 on account of these two parganas. This is a sufficient proof of his neglect, and as I have ordered a *Wasilat* of these mahals to be taken, any sums that he may have defrauded Government of will appear against him, for which he must be made answerable. I have, therefore, put him under *Mohassil* for the present. His conduct has been so very reprehensible, in the instance of advising the malguzars to abscond, that he deserves a very severe punishment for it by being confined in the Havilly Begum; but as I trust you will attend to this my representation of real facts, you will see the necessity of making an example of him, Hanuman Singh, to deter others in the same situation from a similar neglect."

Hanuman Singh's family reside in this pargana, and he has besides a great number of relations, &c. These are the persons he has advised to absent themselves, because he had let out to them all the profitable farms at a very low rate; by which they must have gained very considerable advantage at the end of the year had he been continued.

"I have long had reason to suspect this Hanuman Singh, and in order to bind him as much as possible, I wrote him positive parwanas some time ago, to remind him of the propriety of getting malzamins from every mulguzar. Although this is a practice regularly observed throughout the country, he has not paid the least attention to it, notwithstanding my repeated injunctions.

"Hanuman Singh was appointed *Sazawal* over Raja Bikramajit Singh in the year 1188, and he sent the sum of Rs. 34,000 from the pargana, of which his *Vakil*, Zubber Lall, gave a promissory note, but the amount was never paid into the treasury. Raja Bikramajit Singh, therefore, accuses Hanuman Singh and Zubbur Lall of having embezzled the above sum. Bikramajit Singh says he can prove this, and expects the amount to be carried to his credit. I shall, therefore, make strict enquiry into this complaint and acquaint you with my proceedings."

In the postscript he adds: "I am sorry to acquaint you that, for want of rain in the months of September and October, the country has suffered very much, but as the price of grain has risen very considerably, the loss will not be so great as might be expected from seeing the vast tracts of land that were ploughed, but now lie waste for want of rain."

On the 6th of July 1783, Mr. Brooke submitted proposals for farming the Amany pargana of Bhojpur, Nurhat Samoy, Arrah Barragowan, Charkiyah, and Matfarcat Behea, and in this letter he remarks: "I have had so many instances of the bad management of Amany Aumils that I am induced to recommend the acceptance of the enclosed proposals, being confident that should the parganas remain Amany it will be a loss

to Government. . . . but should you be inclined to keep these Mehals Amany another year, the only mode that presents itself to me for securing the revenue is that of authorizing me to sign the pattas of the different raiyats, for they have so constantly been deceived by the Aumils that they have not the least faith or confidence in them. My signing the different pattas, &c., &c., will give confidence to the raiyats, but the execution of it will be attended with some trouble and expense to me, and, after all, not answer near so well as farming out the parganas agreeable to the enclosed durkhasts, but I shall with pleasure embrace any mode which can possibly tend to increase the collections under my superintendence."

On the 23rd of July the following further report was submitted. I trust its importance as evidence of the state of the administration will justify its reproduction *in extenso* :—"I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 17th of March respecting Shahabad and the conduct of Hanuman Singh, since which I have accurately examined the mufassal accounts and other official testimony of the district for the year 1188, and find that, agreeably to a wasilat of that year, Rs. 4,69,169 was collected, of which was paid into the treasury Rs. 3,59,568. The balance therefore unaccounted for appears to be Rs. 1,09,600. It also appears that Zabburlal, nominally the Vakil of Bikramajit, but in reality a creature of Hanuman Singh's, executed a promissory note to the late Chief's Munshi on account of the Assar kist for the sum of Rs. 45,760, of which Rs. 12,829 has only been received, for which he has credit.

"In consequence of your orders contained in your letter of the 31st of March, I have used every endeavour to bring the accounts of Shahabad for 1188 F. S. to a conclusion, but in vain. The impediments opposed to me are these: When I call upon Hanuman Singh, he affirms that he is exonerated from all responsibility for the balance of 1188, because Bikramajit Singh, the farmer, has executed and delivered to him a *Farcutty*. On the other hand Bikramajit Singh solemnly affirms that Hanuman Singh was appointed *Sazawal* over him in February, 1781, and took the absolute management of the affairs of the mufassal into his hand from that period to the remainder of the year; consequently Government can only have claims on those to whom they specially entrusted the management of the collections, and that, during the time he had the charge of the mufassal in 1188, the kists were regularly and faithfully paid to Government."

Hanuman Singh denies his appointment of *Sazawal* over Bikramajit Singh. I have carefully examined the Company's records, and find no entry of the appointment of Hanuman Singh as *Sazawal* over Bikramajit Singh; yet it was a circumstance so well known, that the affirmation of Bikramajit Singh, together with concurrent testimony of the enclosed copy of a letter from Mr. Maxwell to Maharajá Kullian Singh,

clearly proves that he actually exercised the office of *Sazawal* by official authority during the period above mentioned.

"Hence it may be inferred that the omission of the entry of this appointment on the records of the Company originated from intention and not error; and from the character of Hanuman Singh and the notorious intimacy subsisting between him and the Munshi of the late Chief, I am induced to believe this to be the case; the intention of the parties in this respect proceeding from a presumption that such omission might secure Hanuman Singh from all responsibility in his office when called upon on a future occasion. If from the enclosed evidence and information you should be of opinion that Hanuman Singh was an actual *Sazawal* over Bikramajit Singh, notwithstanding the omission before mentioned, then the *Farcutty* which Hanuman Singh sets forth in his justification cannot have any weight whatsoever; for though it may relieve Hanuman Singh from all subsequent claims of Bikramajit Singh, yet it cannot release him from his obligations to the Company, and of rendering a faithful account of his collections. I request you will send me your orders how I am to act on this occasion."

The case of Hanuman Singh was by no means an isolated one. The correspondence of this period exhibits one continuous struggle between the Revenue chief and dishonest and insubordinate renters and Aumils. Maharaja Kullian Singh, the chief renter, gave as much trouble as the Aumils.

CHAPTER IV.

A Despotic Chief.

I have, in a previous part of this paper, alluded to the arbitrary powers which Maharaja Kullian Singh exercised over his subordinate renters and farmers, and I have alluded to the cases of the Rajas of Tirhut and Ticcary, who were placed in confinement by this man, who also sent sazawals to take charge of their estates.

The first case is that of Madhoo Singh, the Raja of Tirhut. In April 1781 a dispute arose as to the correct amount of malikana and dusturat fees which Madhoo Singh, as zamindar of Tirhut, could collect from the jagirdars of his district. Three petitions were filed on this subject before the Committee of Revenue. One of the complainants was Bhowany Singh, the brother of Maharaja Kullian Singh, and I extract the following from his petition:—

The Rajas of Sircar Tirhut, from the time of Mahabat Singh, have been accustomed to receive about Rs. 22,000 on account of dustoors and malikana, &c., from the office of *Tahud;* and in the year 1186 the

sum of Rs. 22,000 odd was deducted from his jama on the said dustoors. When the affairs of Tirhut were put under the management of Raja Madhoo Singh, he unjustly raised the said dustoors to the sum of Rs. 60,000; so that many men of consequence, such as Nowab Mozaffer Jung and Maharaja Kullian Singh, complained to Government of his exorbitant demands on their jagirs, on account of his dustoors; and they were directed to pay according to the established custom. Now that Raja Bhowany Singh has been appointed *Motahud* of the said sircar from the commencement of the year 1188, the asid Raja Madhoo Singh makes his demands of dustoors agreeably to what was collected while he himself had the management."

In June Madhoo Singh's vakil filed a petition before the Committee of Revenue, from which I extract the following:—

"The Hon. the Governor-General and Council having been pleased to render the settlement of Sircar Tirhut perpetual in the name of Raja Madhoo Singh, they accordingly favoured him with a mokararry sanad and pottah, which he can produce. He has paid his revenue on the above tenure, and there is no balance due from him, as a proof of which he is possessed of a farcuttey signed by the Council at Patna; for he borrowed the sum of Rs. 28,000 to pay what was due at the end of the month of Pous. Now the Raja's country is in charge of Raja Kullian Singh who, having summoned him from his country to Patna, and sent his own aumils into the zamindary to take possession of the dustoors and other russooms of the zamindary, has confined him in his house, and set a guard of sepoys over him. The Raja is not permitted to go anywhere, nor is any person allowed to visit him. My employer is likewise possessed of a sanad which the Council was pleased to grant him, for continuing to him the dustoors and other russooms of the zamindary, according to ancient usage, which have always been fixed and he has constantly received. The whole of the zamindars receive as a bounty from the English Company these dustoors and russooms of their respective zamindaries."

It is not my purpose to discuss the merits of this case, but merely to show the arbitrary power of confinement which Kullian Singh appears to have exercised, as evidenced from the papers.

The next case is that of Mitarjit Singh, the Raja of Ticcary. It will be sufficient if I quote the following passage from Mr. Brooke's report, dated 24th September 1782, to the Committee of Revenue:—

"I was some time ago favoured with your letter of the 5th instant, directing me to enquire into the nature of the balance which Maharaja Kullian Singh represents to be due to him from Mitarjit Singh, zemindar of Ticcary. I immediately made the Maharaja acquainted with your orders, and told him at the same time that I should send for Metarjit Singh, and desired him to write a purwana to that effect.

Far from complying with my request, he sent positive orders to Kutabulli Beg, *Sazawal* of Ticcary, to keep Mitarjit in close confinement. As a proof I enclose Mitarjit's arzy to me representing the cruelty he is treated with. In short the Maharaja is determined that this business shall not be settled by me, as will be seen by the enclosed copy of his letter to me on the subject; and as he has on several occasions treated me with disrespect, I hope you will reprimand him for the impropriety of his conduct. I have this moment received an arzy from Mitarjit's vakil, copy of which I also enclose for your information. As the Maharaja is determined not to release Mitarjit, I conclude his claim is not very fair. The disobedience of the Maharaja to your orders in the present instance is, I hope, unexampled. It is needless for me to point out his desserts, but as he looks upon himself as an independent Chief, I shall suspend my enquiries till favoured with your further orders."

MISCONDUCT OF AUMILS.

When the chief renter treated the authority of the Revenue chief with disrespect, it is not wonderful to find the under-renters and farmers following the same example.

In Siris Cutumba in 1783, six aumils were employed one after another. Udit Narain embezzled large sums of money and advised the raiyats to abscond in order to avoid paying their kists, for which he was speedily arrested and confined. In 1782 Mr. Brooke reports that he can get no one to accept the farm of Nurhat Samoy, as "the confusion occasioned by the variety of aumils sent into these parganas has lessened the number of raiyats very considerably, and cultivation is entirely neglected."

In March 1784 Mr. Brooke complains that he is much concerned that the Committee of Revenue have not pointed out to him the conduct they wished him to pursue towards "aumils who refuse to pay their kists in proper time," adding "some severe measures are absolutely necessary, and if they are not very shortly adopted, I shall not have the least attention paid to my orders, and many of the aumils will fall considerably in arrears, particularly the aumils of Havilly Azimabad and Sandeh Ballia. I am at a loss to account for their disrespectful behaviour towards me; but if you expect me to realize the settlements of the parganas under my charge, I hope you will invest me with full powers to use such mode of obtaining payment of the kists as may to me seem best calculated to answer that end."

It appears that in April 1784, Sayud Mirtooza Khan, Aumil of Sandeh Ballia, preferred several charges against Mr. Brooke and his subordinates of having publicly disgraced him, and on the strength of this representation he got the Committee to transfer those parganas to the jurisdiction of Mr. Bathurst. These charges were all false, as

Mr. Brooke proved, and in his letter of explanation he very justly remarks: "I deem it needless to point out to you the great discredit I shall suffer if these parganas are permitted to remain under Mr. Bathurst, or the evil tendency of removing Aumils from one jurisdiction to another on their simple request."

In regard to the other man, Mir Barkatullah, the Aumil of Havilly Azimabad, it appears from Mr. Ross's letter, dated 13th August 1784, to the Committee of Revenue, that he was guilty of gross insolence to him, and set his authority at defiance, treating his purwana "with ineffable contempt." He formulates the charges against him thus:—

"Mir Barkatullah, not satisfied to keep within the bounds of mediocrity, presumes upon my indulgence, and usurps every pottah and mukarary lease which he had granted agreeably to the terms and dates of the different obligations herein enclosed; and sets aside his seal and signature, as nothing binding in those sacred ties of Government and social compact. These arbitrary and unjust proceedings of Mir Barkatullah, coming daily before me, were so very numerous from all quarters, as to take up my sole attention. I frequently admonished Mir Barkatullah against oppressing the poor raiyats, and was often obliged to give him safeguard from the Revenue office to his budgerow, for so obnoxious had this man made himself to the whole of the inhabitants of the city by his oppression and tyranny, that he durst not venture to Bankipur in his palanquin for fear that the populace would pull him to pieces; and therefore he was obliged to pass to and from the city by water. My public duty called upon me to check the intemperance of Mir Barkatullah, and I even wished to settle his difference with the aumils by arbitration, as being the most equitable manner and to the entire satisfaction of the parties; but after having acquiesced thereto, he has violated every tie of arbitration in the most open manner, by secretly opposing my parwana throughout his districts. At last finding that I was not to be tampered with by bribes or threats, he withdrew himself entirely from attending the Durbar or presence. This was a matter of no concern to me while he had a vakil to represent him, and I therefore went on with the current business of the *Nizamat* as usual; but upon my purwana of the 5th instant being returned to the chobdar with the most sovereign contempt, the question then only remained whether he or I was to be Chief of Patna. A naik and six sepoys brought him to the Revenue office at Mr. Brooke's by my express orders; and I only required from him a muchulka or acknowledgment for his daring behaviour, and that he would not in future oppose the orders of Government; but this he has repeatedly refused to do." He adds pathetically: "I presided over these provinces during the revolt of Raja Cheyt Singh, but during the whole of that critical time never met with such treatment as I have experienced from this man."

CHAPTER V.

The Shahabad Estates.

Though the preceding cases show in a tolerably clear light the oppression, tyranny, and insubordination that prevailed in Bihar, yet the picture presented of Shahabad in 1785-86 is of a more gloomy and terrible nature.

It will be remembered that the opposition of the raiyats in 1782-83 resulted in the estate of Raja Bikramajit and Bhup Narain being made Amany, *i.e.*, managed by Government aumils, except parganas Piro, Nanore and Powar, which were under settlement with Bhup Narain for five years. We have seen the conduct of one of these aumils; but matters appear to have drifted rapidly from bad to worse.

In 1783 the parganas of Bhojepur, Matfarcat Behea, Arrah, and Barragowan were held Amany at a rental of Rs. 3,26,017; while taluk Behea, Dinwar, and Dinnarah, were held by Bhup Narain in farm for Rs. 94,786. The total rental of Shahabad, excluding Sasaram, Chaynepur, and Chowsa, with their dependant taluks, amounted to Rs. 4,20,803. In the year 1188F.S., when Raja Bikramjit Singh had the farm, the rental was Rs. 5,21,208; but the Raja fell in arrears to the tune of some Rs. 70,000.

In 1191 or 1783-84 the settlement of Sircar Shahabad and Sircar Rhotas was made with Ahmed Ali Khan for 10 lakhs. This man already held farms in Saran and Ballia to the amount of four lakhs, and it was hoped he would restore order in the revenue administration of Shahabad; but by the end of 1785 he fell in arrears to the sum of one-and-a-half lakhs, and threw up the farm in disgust.

In 1786 the farm was taken of Sircar Shahabad only, by Hussein Ally Khan, for Rs. 4,86,932, but the result was no better; and the Board of Revenue in desperation directed Raja Bikramajit Singh to be restored as farmer of Shahabad. Among the defaulters under Ahmed Ally Khan were Sayed Nural Hussein Khan, who owed some Rs. 50,000; Bhola Nath, the under-farmer of Bhojepur, who absconded, owing Ahmed Ally one lakh; Dhole Singh, the zamindar of Dinnarah, who in broad daylight attacked the cutcherry of Ahmed Ali, killed four and wounded 13 of his men, released certain malguzars in confinement for arrears, and carried off all the cash he could find in the cutcherry. He set the sepoys sent to arrest him at defiance, collected a large force at Chowsa, and refused to surrender, requiring ultimately the despatch of a small military expedition to arrest him.

The years 1785-86 were years of heart-rending vexation to Mr. Brooke. No less than three false charges were brought against him by under-farmers of Shahabad; the raiyats became lawless and turbulent

to an astonishing degree; and even in those early years of our administration had learnt to play the Fouzdari and Dewani Courts off against the Revenue officers. In the midst of all his troubles the Committee of Revenue and the Board of Revenue were constantly passing vigorous censures on him, superseding his authority and holding him personally liable for the balance of revenue due from defaulting farmers.

Syud Nurul Hussein in 1191F.S. farmed a part of Arrah pargana from Ahmed Ali, in the name of his relative Tabarrack Hussein, and appointed Sakawatali his manager. Similarly, Mustafa Cooly Khan rented the remainder of pargana Arrah from Ahmed Alli Khan, and very shortly afterwards he and Nurul Hussein fell out about the Khurpur *Diara*, each claiming it as part of his taluk.

Mr. Brooke decided in favour of Mustafa Cooly Khan. Nurul Hussein appealed to the Committee of Revenue, charging Mr. Brooke with partiality. The Committee of Revenue took the unusual step of sending the case for further enquiry to the Judge of the Dewani Adalat. Subsequently, a commission was issued to Mr. Brooke to continue certain inquiries, but he indignantly refused to have anything further to say to the case, remarking: "I have thought if necessary to refer the commission you favoured me with to Mr. Ross, my head assistant, who will probably arrive here in about ten days. I have been particularly induced to adopt this mode of carrying your commission into execution, on account of the seeming impropriety of my having any further concern in a cause in which I have already been accused of partiality by one of the parties, and when such representations have so far been attended to, as to induce you to write to the Judge at this station to examine witnesses in the same cause, surely, if that step was thought necessary, I can see no reason why it should not have been observed in the present instance."

Mr. Ross's report might be extracted here as showing the style of official correspondence in those days:—

"In conformity to your orders, parwanas were issued to the parties to attend. Mir Tabarak Hussein, who was the only evidence or party that attended on the part of Nurul Hussein Khan, upon being called on to declare what he knew respecting the matter in dispute, seemed to be totally ignorant, and affected to be quite deaf, notwithstanding he had a prompter and flapper to his ears, and acted the dumb part in the Mock Doctor to great perfection. Had I been inclined to have concluded the farce with the punishment the imposition deserved, it would have afforded a pantomimic entertainment to the spectators; I properly concluded Nurul Hussein's complaint to be totally groundless."

This, however, did not satisfy the parties, and they next advanced, through their vakil, very serious charges of misconduct against Mr. Brooke; declaring he had extorted certain signatures from Sakowat

Ali and Tabarak Hussein to an account they disputed; that he had threatened to illtreat them, wrongfully confined Sakowat Ali, &c. These were all base fabrications, except the confinement of Sakowat for arrears of revenue. Mr. Brooke in an indignant letter says — "I neither desired them to sign the *Wasool Bauki* account received from Ahmed Ali Khan, nor have they ever signed or put their seals to the account which they delivered in themselves. I desired it, but they declined, and I did not, therefore, insist on it. How the vakil of Syud Nurul Hussein Khan has dared to invent such falsehoods to my prejudice, I am at a loss to account for. In respect of threatening either Tabarak Hussein or Sakowat Ali, it never entered in my mind." After admitting the confinements of Sakowat Ali for arrears of revenue due to Ahmad Ali, he proceeds: "As for forcing Sakowat Ali to put his seal to the *Wassool Bauki* account and otherwise threatening and ill-treating Tabarak Hussein and Sakowat Ali, these are falsehoods upon my honour, and I hereby bind myself to prove upon oath that they are." He concludes: "It is a painful reflection that gentlemen in high station should be liable to have their characters aspersed in the manner mine has been in this instance, and I, therefore, claim justice."

THE SHAHABAD RAIYATS.

In a petition to Government, enumerating the difficulties he encountered in collecting the revenues of Shahabad, Ahmed Ali says :—

"The raiyats are remarkable for their tricks and refractory behaviour, and when the kists are demanded they make various and improper excuses and evasions, nor do they attend to the people put over them to enforce payment, but frequently beat and drive them away. They have also a custom of stabbing themselves when closely pressed for payment; and in order to avoid paying their kists, they often get a friend to complain against them in the *Adalat* for sums supposed to be lent them, and which they refuse to pay; and they also contrive by similar means to be summoned by the *Adalat* as witnesses at the time when the kists become due; by these means they gain time, and I am the sufferer in the end."

Mr. Brooke, in submitting the memorial on the 13th of July 1785, writes :—

"The circumstance he represents respecting the zamindar of pargana Dinarrah is a fact, and I can answer for the riotous conduct of the ticcadars and raiyats of Shahabad, as they frequently have had the insolence to chase away people whom I had sent with dustuks over them. In short, there is no kind of villainy which they do not practice when closely pressed for payment of the kists: and the *Adalat* and

fauzdari being under different persons, it is not in the least improbable that under-farmers may, when owing a considerable balance, contrive to have a suit instituted against them in the *Adalut* for a trifling sum for which they are confined; and by that means they avoid the payment of a larger amount. Imprisonment seems no sort of punishment to a native of these parts. In respect to the *Fauzdari*, various are the means adopted by the raiyats to give trouble to the aumil, of which I have experienced several instances, and I am confident that the farmers are on this account deprived of the power of realizing their just balances, which is ultimately a loss to Government. It is not here, as in Bengal, where a peon, acting by order, can bring a whole pargana of raiyats before the Collector without the least trouble. In this part of the country, and particularly in Shahabad, it is very different, for they do not scruple here to oppose even an armed force sent by order of Government."

On the 28th of May 1786, he writes: "The people of Shahabad are remarkably troublesome, and they are at this time quarrelling with the aumils about the pattas granted to them at the beginning of the year by the former *Aumil*; all these disputes at this particular season are calculated to put off payment of the kists, and such are the tricks of the raiyats of that part of the country, that the aumils, for fear of the *Fauzdari* Court, dare not take those steps to secure payment which are customary and usually observed in the collections."

The state of the district in June 1786 necessitated Mr. Brooke going into camp at Arrah, though he was in bad health at the time, and the heat was terrific.

A BRIGAND ZAMINDAR.

On the 5th of July he writes complaining that no aumils possessed of any property, or who have any regard for their character, "will come near Shahabad, the people here being so unlike those of any other part of the country, and so famous for their tricks and for making false complaints in the *Fauzdari*, in order to avoid payment of the kists due from them, that the aumils are really afraid of using the necessary and customary modes of enforcing payment, and hence, of course, they fall in arrears and are disgraced.

"Dhole Singh, the zamindar of pargana Dinnarah, has refused to attend before me, and has not even condescended to answer my parwana. I therefore sent six sepoys to bring him in; but they write me they cannot comply with my order, as the zamindar has assembled nearly 600 men, and is determined to make a resistance. The sepoys are still there, and I wrote to Mr. Grant to have Dhole Singh apprehended and sent to me. Mr. Grant has informed me that Raja Mohi Narain has

promised to send people to seize him. This Dhole Singh is also zamindar of parts of pargana Chowsa in the Benares district, and is the man who, this time last year, went to the *Aumil's* cutcherry, took away all the ready money that was there, and in the scuffle which ensued between his and the *Aumil's* attendants four men were killed, and many others wounded. I am, therefore, of opinion that a large party of sepoys should be sent from Dinapore to seize this man and all who have assisted him to resist my orders; for if he is not made a public example of, others seeing that he, by his resistance to the orders of Government, avoids payment of his kists, will observe the same mode, and throw the whole sircar into confusion, and make it difficult for me ever to realize any part of the revenue from this country. Thus situated, I am far from being desirous of making the settlement of Shahabad." He continues: "I do not feel myself easy at the jama of this place falling off annually; but which I foresee will constantly be the case unless the settlement is made for five years with a regular small increase upon each year, and no aumil to have charge of the collections exceeding one lakh of rupees; and even then it will be difficult for them to give proper security, while few will be found to venture proposals for any of the parganas in Shahabad, unless the *Fouzdary* is put into the hands of the Revenue chief." Though this was ultimately done, still for a long time Mr. Brooke had to struggle not only against dishonest farmers, disloyal zamindars, and a turbulent population, but against the unmerited censure that continually flowed, in remarkably strong language, from the gentlemen who sat calmly in their office in Calcutta to criticise the balances due from his charge.

Writing to the Board on the 30th of October 1780, he complains of the very strong terms in which they have couched their disapprobation of the heavy balance in his division; and hopes they "will be induced to remove a censure so severe, which could not fail to give me great uneasiness, although confident of making it clearly appear to you, gentlemen, that I have not been guilty of neglect." This he did very effectually. In the concluding part of this letter he protests again vehemently against the decision to make him personally responsible for the balances, and appeals to the Governor-General in Council. He points out that his pay is already inadequate to meet the expenses of his life, and therefore it was impossible for him to be held responsible for such an indefinite sum as the balance of revenue of a province. He represents he will be in a worse plight than aumils, who, if they suffer losses, also hope to make some gain, and concludes: "It is not within the lines of any man to ascertain, at the beginning of the year, how much will be collected from any district, so various are the accidents and causes that may occur to set aside the best regulated conjectures, for I cannot call them by any other name."

CHAPTER VI.

Cesses.

Though Mr. Brooke painted the character of the raiyats of Shahabad in such strong colours, yet it appears that they were subjected to much oppression and tyranny at this time. Subsequent inquiries into the claims of Ahmed Ali Khan proved that he had embezzled no less than Rs. 56,472 of the collections; and his claim of Rs. 1,85,673, as the outstanding balances of the raiyats, was found largely made up of illegal abwabs or cesses, which being deducted left only a real balance of Rs. 80,507, or less than half what was claimed.

Among the various cesses and tolls, legal and illegal, which were levied at this period, Mr. Brooke condemns in no measured terms the royalty charged, under the term of *Soorup Mehal*, on the collection and sale of red lead, &c., which was farmed out, for the whole of Subeh Bihar, to Mir Barkutullah. Mr. Brooke writes:—

"I beg leave to point out to you that the *Soorup Mehal* as well as *Neqoss* are very oppressive, as thousands are put to inconvenience on account of these articles of revenue; and although this may not appear a proper time for relinquishing so large a sum of money annually, still I think it highly advisable; considering how many people will be made easy by their abolition. If you should have any doubts on this subject, I beg leave to refer you to the several Collectors in Bihar for their opinion, as to the oppression practised in their districts by the gomashtas of the *Soorup Mehal*, and without which the Government rent on that article cannot possibly be realized. Should you be averse to giving up so large a part of the revenue as the *Sobrup Mehal*, I hope you will not have any objection to the abolition of the *Neqoss Mehal*, the jama of which does not exceed Rs. 1,800, as the collection of it gives pain and vexation, more or less, to every inhabitant in the city of Patna."

The revenue from the Soorup Mehal is not given, but it must have been very considerable, for the Farmer's bill of compensation one year, owing to Mr. Law, Collector of Sircar Rhotas, ejecting his gomashtas from his districts amounted to no less than Rs. 19,413.

It appears the Government, at this time, also collected a cess called *Chisam Hissa* in Bihar.

The imposition of the *Halbungen*, cess was declared illegal in 1781; and aymadars were exempted the same year from all levies except an assessment of Rs. 2,000 annually.

Zamindars were in the habit of collecting toll and custom dues in Bihar, to the prejudice of Government; and hence the following rule was

promulgated as the 30th article of the general plan for the collection of the customs :—

"Notwithstanding the repeated orders of the Government for abolishing all chowkies and faudees for the collection of rahadarry duties in these provinces, yet there are still some zamindars so hardy as to venture to disregard the authority of the rowannahs by extorting money from the merchants. It will, therefore, be necessary for the Governor-General and Council to repeat these orders once more to the superior authorities in each district, and to inform them in future when any complaints are made and proved, the Commissioners are empowered not only to oblige the immediate offender to refund the money so extorted, but to inflict corporal punishment upon him on the spot where the exactions were made; and the zamindar, chowdhry, talukdar, and other proprietors of the pargana, or portion of land, where the offence was committed, shall be punishable by a confiscation of the whole or part of his land by the Governor-General and Council, according to the degree of the offence; nor will the plea of ignorance in any such case be admitted, except in the case of minors, women, or persons otherwise incapable of acting for themselves, in which case the actual manager shall suffer such punishment as the Governor-General and Council shall determine."

Notwithstanding these drastic orders, the practice was by no means suppressed, as the following cases prove; nor, indeed, to this day, though a century has elapsed, will some of the zamindars of Bihar give up collecting rahadarry dues in their estates, though they know such acts now amount to the offence of extortion under the Penal Code.

One merchant complained that he had to suspend his intention of importing grain and seed to Patna, because he found he had to pay the following rahadarry dues :—

At Sasaram	...	...	21 pice per	"*Tongey*."
„ Daudnagar	...	...	6 dam „	„
„ Chowki Anganar		...	1 dam „	„
„ Arwal	...	...	2 pice „	„
„ Bekram	...	...	1 dam „	„
„ Duriarpur	...	...	2 pice „	„

Another merchant had to pay 3 pice at Arwal, 2½ pice at Bikram, and 2 pice per "*Tongey*" at Nowbatpur.

A third complained that between Daudnagar and Nowbatpur on the way from Sasaram he had been stopped six times and made to pay toll.

A fourth complained that in importing blankets from the west he had been made to pay 3 pice at Dullipur and 2 pice at Anchur, both in Shahabad.

A fifth complained that the kotwal at Sasaram had extorted Rs. 20 from him.

In May 1782 the duties levied on horse merchants were declared illegal, and on the 3rd of May 1782 the Governor-General and Council ruled that "if any person shall levy an imposition on the vendors or owners of horses or stop horses from passing on any pretence whatever, or shall suffer others under their authority to do so, shall be obliged to refund treble the amount of the exaction so taken, and be made answerable for whatever loss the merchant or proprietor of the horse shall have sustained by such detention."

In August 1782 the cess called *Russoon Khazanah* was abolished. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Government, the imposition of *abwabs* and the collection of tolls were commonly prevalent.

In his report of the 22nd of April 1786, Mr. Brooke says in regard to Ahmed Ali's case: "The deducting of the *abwabs* was a piece of justice to the raiyats, for it is forbid by the orders of Government; and I have repeated these orders very frequently in the course of these last two years, owing to the frequent deviations which I have observed throughout the Mufassal, from the orders of Government."

In another report on the imperfections in the system of collecting in the Mufassal, Mr. Brooke says:—"The zamindars and renters under my authority have not imposed any new cesses on the raiyats for these three years past, and many which appeared to me oppressive have been abolished. The Zamindars and other Farmers will always attempt, under various pretences, to impose on the raiyats; but it is the business of the Collector to interfere and prevent such impositions, and I am happy in the reflection that I have, by my constant attention to the just claims of the raiyats, in a great measure set aside this evil practice; but it will be impossible effectually to remove it while the present system of a new yearly settlement exists, as the new *aumil* seldom gets possession till three or four months of the year are passed; and he then objects to the *pattas* granted to the raiyats by his predecessor, where he sees the raiyat is likely to reap any advantage; and where it is the reverse, he rigidly exacts the revenue agreeable to the conditions of the *patta*; and, although the raiyat on a reference to the Collector will get justice done him, still it is always attended with much trouble and vexation. A settlement made under these circumstances, and that possibly to the highest bidder, will not admit of the *aumil* affording that indulgence and encouragement that is necessary to induce the raiyats to an increase of cultivation; and the *aumil* not being answerable, is of course indifferent for the revenue of the ensuing year."

In advocating a five years' settlement he remarks: "The raiyats will then have a reliance on the *pattas* granted them by the *aumils* or zamindar under such settlement, and it will be to their interest to adhere to such engagement." It is clear that *abwabs* were considered illegal; nevertheless when in 1793 the Government ordered the

amalgamation of the *abwabs* with the *asal* or fixed rent, they virtually legalized the system of enhancement, which had hitherto depended on the power of the landlord or *aumil* to extort it from the raiyats at the end of their *lathis*.

That Government always, in the predecennial period, considered the raiyats' rent to be fixed, except where the system of paying in kind on the crop grown and harvested existed, as in Bihar, is, I think, evident from the following notification:—

To zamindars, talukdars, mustagirs, malguzars, &c.: "Whereas the general increase in the revenue which has been established by Government may have appeared to those unacquainted with the principles of the *Huzoor* a general increase on the whole body of the people, it is therefore made known to you that the expectation of the said increase, having been formed upon a comparison between the *Jaydad* agreeable to the *Hustabood* of each mehal and the amount paid into the public treasury, it is to be realized out of the profits of the zamindars and other landholders, and the additional revenue arising from the increase of population and cultivation, and not by an assessment of any new *abwabs* to be collected from the raiyat or cultivator."

It was, therefore, a principle of these settlements not to raise the rent of the cultivators, but to curtail the profits of the zamindars. There can be very little doubt that the object of the Decennial Settlement was also to secure fixity of rent to the cultivators.

PATWARIS AND CANUNGOES.

It would be incomplete to finish this notice of the early Revenue administration of Bihar without referring to the agency employed by Government for controlling the conduct of the farmers and protecting the rights of the raiyats.

This agency in the Mufassal was also an indigenous one, consisting of the sadar and Mufassal canungoes and the patwaris. The latter were the village accountants, who were paid by fees levied from the raiyats, called *Patwaris Neq*. In Shahabad the raiyats still support the patwaris, though the zamindars nominate them, and the Collectors appoint or dismiss them. The post, like all Indian institutions, was of a hereditary nature; and it is so still. In South Bihar, and more particularly in Shahabad, the patwaris' fees are charged, in the jamabandi papers, under a separate column, and are, when in cash, paid by the zamindar, who collects it with his rent from the raiyat. When the tenure is bhowli, *i.e.*, when the rent is paid in kind, the quantity of grain which represents the "Neq" is first separated, before the division between the tenant and landlord takes place. By this system, which was the original one in Bihar, the "Neq" is charged half to the

landlord and half to the raiyat. In North Bihar the patwari has more or less developed into a zamindari servant pure and simple; but in South Bihar, and more particularly in Shahabad, he continues, as he ever was, an official; sometimes paid wholly by the raiyat, and sometimes partly by the raiyat and partly by the zamindar; but independent of both, so far as his official duties are concerned.

Above the patwaris were the Mufassal canungoes, one for each pargana, who supervised the work of the patwaris, tested the accounts of the village, and maintained the record of rights, including the record of rent-free holdings. The sadar canungoes did for a province what the Mufassal canungoes did for a pargana. The canungoes were paid by rent-free grants called "canungoes' Nankari," which were excluded in the settlements. They also were allowed to collect dues from the raiyats called "*Nim Tucci*" or "*Russoom.*" The duties of the canungoes and their position in the revenue administration are thus summarised by Mr. Charters in a letter dated 19th April 1782. A comprehensive report was called for on this occasion from Mr. Brooke regarding the position, duties, and emoluments of the canungoes in Bihar, but unfortunately the report is missing.

"In the course of the enquiries to which I have been led, the duties of the canungoes appear to me to have been very loosely exercised, and their Mufassal records to be very imperfectly preserved. This may very possibly have proceeded from the improper restrictions put upon them by Raja Kyalliram during the period of his authority in the *Subeh;* and from the malguzars under him denying to the canoongoes any inspection of their transactions. As an authentic and regular record of the offices of sadar and Mufassal canoongoes becomes almost the only test of the various revenue transactions from the renter to the raiyat, and likewise forms a very material rule of evidence in the proceedings of the Courts of Dewany Adalat, it is of much consequence that they should be kept in a manner adequate to such objects."

The modern canungoe has no sort of affinity to the ancient canungoe. For agricultural purposes, whether statistical or otherwise, he is perfectly useless. Indeed, at present his duties are more those of a surveyor than anything else. It was the rule in former days for patwaris to file a copy of the village accounts every six months in the Collector's office, but unfortunately this rule was abrogated some years ago; and much valuable statistics of agriculture, not to say valuable evidence of a raiyat's rights, are now not forthcoming. True, such papers, unless accurately prepared, do more harm than good; but the remedy for this surely is to bring the patwari again under the direct control and supervision of the canungoes, and not to give up much valuable information.

CHAPTER VII

Opium.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

Next to land, opium was, in 1781—85, as it is to this day, one of the chief sources of revenue. It appears from the correspondence that in the year 1774-75 the opium contract was held by two natives—Mir Munneer and Ram Chand Pundit; but no particulars are given. In 1775-76 and 1776-77 the contract for supplying the Company with opium was held by Mr. Griffiths. This gentleman supplied the East India Company that year with 4,627 maunds of opium, of which 3,660 maunds were "contract" opium, and 967 maunds "surplus" opium. Out of the "contract" opium, 1,742 maunds were made over to the Dutch East Indian Company, which, I have previously said, paid the English Company a nazzarana of Rs. 10,000 for the privilege of getting its opium from the English contractor. The French also dealt in opium, but to a very limited extent. They received only 200 maunds in that year. In 1776-77 the "contract" opium was delivered to the English Company at Rs. 95 (sicca) per maund, and the "surplus" at Rs. 120 (sicca) per maund. The French and Dutch received their opium at Rs. 103 (sicca) per maund.

Mr. Mackenzie took the contract in 1777-78, and he held it down to 1780-81. He delivered, in 1777-78, 3,660 maunds of "contract" opium at Rs. 95 (sicca) per maund, and 2,242 maunds "surplus" at Rs. 120 (sicca) per maund. In 1778-79 he delivered in all 6,960 maunds; in 1779-80, 6,592 maunds; and in 1780-81, 5,462 maunds to the English Company and 1,584 maunds to the Dutch Company. It appears that the contractor packed and despatched his opium to Calcutta, and in 1780 he charged Rs. 23,543 for packing and sending 2,731 chests to Calcutta. In 1781 this charge was increased to Rs. 10 per chest. He also received a commission of two-and-a-half per cent. on the sale of the opium. In 1780 he charged Rs. 20,683 (sicca) commission on the sale of 2,296 chests.

The value of the 2,296 chests at 418 sunnat rupees was 9,59,728, the commission on which, at two-and-a-half per cent., is given at sunnat Rs. 23,993-3-2, corresponding to 20,683 sicca rupees.

Mr. Mackenzie's local agent at Patna was Mr. Campbell.

From September 1781 to September 1785 the opium contract was in the hands of Mr. Sullivan, whose agent, Mr. Young, appears to have been originally a member of the Patna Provincial Council.

From the accounts it appears that the Company was in the habit of making very large advances to the opium contractors for the manufacture of opium, and in 1778-79 these advances amounted to Rs. 7,43,700. Though these figures are insignificant in comparison to the present outlay on, and income from, opium, still they indicate a fairly extensive business in Bihar at that early period.

CONTRACTORS' SQUABBLES.

There was a good deal of lively correspondence between the opium contractor, the opium inspectors, and the revenue chief at Patna, and some of this might be found interesting, if not instructive. I have stated, in a previous part of this paper, that there were two opium inspectors in 1781—one Mr. Walker and the other Mr. Mackenzie. Mr. Walker and the contractor's agent, Mr. Campbell, fell out in 1781. Mr. Walker charged the contractor with storing the crude opium in a private godown instead of in the Company's godown at Patna. Mr. Campbell rejoined that "Mr. Walker has not the smallest control over the contractor beyond the public godown." When the investment is sent there, he, with the other judges, are to declare its quality, and receive "or reject it." He dares any one to say that he "has hurt the quality of the Hon. Company's investment," and finally concludes with the remark that Mr. Walker is "entirely out of his line," and might "with equal justice say that the gomashtas should not receive the opium in the mofussil, but at the public godown, and then furnish him with an abstract of the contractors' account." These two gentlemen do not appear to have been on very amicable terms. On the 9th of May Mr. Walker addressed a long complaint to the Revenue chief, in which he asserted that crude opium sent into the Company's godown was of a very thin and inferior quality. He adds: "I beg leave to observe that if the cakes are manufactured with too thin opium, innumerable disputes will attend throughout the whole process of drying them, which I wish to avoid; and the cakes will appear to the merchants to have too much covering, whence a prejudice will generally arise; besides it is a certain truth that the proper state and consistency of the opium can be better adjudged before it is made into cakes than afterwards." He also complains of the conduct of "a low European" employed in the godown by the contractor's agent.

Mr. Campbell, however, submitted his own version of the dispute, and did not forget to have a hit at Mr. Walker's knowledge of the opium business. Referring to Mr. Walker's proposal to manipulate the thin opium by the hand process, he says: "It is well known to every person conversant in the opium business that prior to the setting in of the rains, the mode Mr. Walker proposes must make it thin in place of thick, for it must melt the gum, and reduce the whole to a watery substance,

more specially as the easterly winds have prevailed this season to a degree that has not been known for many years past, and which I have reason to suppose will not alter now, the rains being so near at hand."

This dispute was thought serious enough to engage the attention of the Governor-General and Council, and ended rather disastrously for both parties. The contractor lost his contract for the next year, and the opium inspectors' appointments were abolished.

Before Mr. Campbell yielded up the godowns to the new contractor's agent, Mr. Young, he had a lively passage at arms with that gentleman, whom he sneers at as a late member of Council. It appears that, when Mr. Sullivan's contract came into force, his agent, Mr. Young, sent a couple of his private sepoys to take charge of the opium godown. Mr. Campbell, the agent of the late contractor, promptly had these sepoys taken into custody by the Militia sepoys on guard at the godown. To Mr. Young's complaint he rejoins: "I do not charge the man with theft, but he had the presumption to stand at the godown gate with a drawn bayonet in his hand; for what purpose I have not yet learned, and as there cannot be any other guard at that place but the one allowed by Government, I thought it consistent with my duty, and the charge I have of the Company's property, to seize the delinquent. Mr. Young is surely better acquainted with the service of this Government than to suppose that I should allow his armed men to stand as sentinels, when he, Mr. Young, had no authority, and when there was a regular established guard of the Company's sepoys acting under my orders. I delivered the prisoner over to Major Hardy, the Commanding Officer at Patna, who knows best how to punish those that assume the military garb in his jurisdiction."

Here is another cutting sneer at Mr. Young: "From such a lofty style, a stranger would be ready to suppose that there really existed an authority in the humble office of agent for the opium contractor, but Mr. Young, my successor to that office, ought to have known better; for I well remember when he, Mr. Young, acted in the very station which you, Sir, now fill, that I derived all my authority from him and his Council." And again: "Had Mr. Young been unacquainted with the orders of Government, I should have imputed his application to ignorance; but when I consider the station Mr. Young lately held in the Patna Council, I am apt to conclude that he has much spare time on his hands, and takes this method of employing it, by giving you, Sir, and me, much unnecessary trouble. Those who know Mr. Young and me will apply the term tyrant, where they think it will fit."

Mr. Ross, in deciding this little storm in a teapot, expresses his "astonishment at Mr. Young's presumption in attempting to subvert the authority of this Government, in daring to introduce armed men into the Honourable Company's godown, clothed in military array, which he

and every individual must be sensible is contrary to all authority in every regular and well-established Government"; and he adds: "I approve of the sepoy's conduct in having executed your orders in seizing the assassin in masquerade."

Mr. Young appears at this period to have had no end of grievances. He complained against Mr. Mackenzie for taking away some opium his chaukidar had seized as contraband; he complained that Mir Burkatullah in pargana Hajipur had beaten and imprisoned his gomashta; and finally, he charged the under-farmers, in Bihar generally, with extorting illegal "batta" from the opium raiyats. He calls it an "abuse of a new and singular species."

ILLEGAL BATTA.

He declared that the renter of Hajipur charged a commission of 6¼ per cent. on "*Sicca*" and 12½ per cent. on all *Sunnat* rupees, whereas the proper charge was 3 per cent. on *Sunnat*. He asserts that in pargana Phulwarry, "near to the seat of Government," the farmer contents himself with a commission only of 1·9 per cent. He also complains that the farmer of Shahabad demands "*Goorshy Sunnat*," a species which does not exist, and in which the revenue of that district was never paid, or a batta of 2½ pice on each *Sunnat* rupee, which is equal to 4·3 per cent.; also in parganas Arwal, Masowrah, and Ghyaspur, half an anna, or 3·2 per cent., is demanded."

He concludes: "The orders of Government are express and positive, that no batta shall be collected on any species of *Siccas*, the current specie of the country; and that no distinction whatever shall be made between the *Siccas* of different years, or those of the Calcutta, Murshedabad, and Patna mints; and Government in consequence receives and issues them indiscriminately at the treasury, but if the Farmers should be suffered to introduce these new distinctions, it will be of no benefit to Government, but prove highly detrimental to the contract, as every raiyat will expect, and, indeed, does demand, a proportionate deduction on the advances made to him: although those advances are made with the very money I receive from the treasury."

Mr. Brooke, as requested, issued parwanas to the "Collectors in the Mufassal," directing them not to demand "extraordinary batta." This did not suit Mr. Young, for, as he says, the parwanas "by leaving the point of custom to the authors of these abuses, have not in the least contributed to remedy the evil, and it exists to as great a degree as ever." The following extract has some historical value:—

"Calcutta and Murshidabad Siccas were first received and issued at this treasury in 1779. Attempts were at first made to depreciate their value, both by the shroffs and renters; but where Government had no distinction, individuals were not allowed to do so, and the proceedings of

the Patna Council will fully explain what I now assert, and I hope will convince you that the exactions of which I compla in are such as the late contractor did not experience." He concludes: "I again repeat that the various exactions of batta so fully specified in my letter of the 26th of October were not tolerated, and did not exist, during the jurisdiction of the Patna Council; that my predecessor did not experience them; that such exactions are unauthorized by Government and repugnant to its orders, and that they tend to defeat the measure of having but one mint, which was established for the express purpose of abolishing them."

Mr. Brooke in reply wrote on the 10th of December 1781:—

"I am sorry I cannot comply with your request of giving you other parwanas, for when the merchants of Patna charge a batta on the different kinds of rupees, the same practice will be observed throughout the province; and such is the distress of individuals at this particular time, from the scarcity of cash, that I do not think it would be prudent to use any coercive measures with the merchants, lest it should be urged as a plea for their quitting Patna, a circumstance that might be attended with very bad consequences. I have many other reasons for not issuing any other parwanas, which shall be represented when I am called upon by my superiors."

The matter was carried up to the Committee of Revenue, who remarked: "With respect to *Sunnat* rupees ..... we understand that in every district there is a certain established rate beyond which the farmer or aumil has no right to make any demands. With respect to the sicca, it is an old regulation of Government that no batta shall be collected upon them; and we desire to know your reasons for neglecting to furnish Mr. Young with the parwanas he applied for, prohibiting the collection of batta upon sicca rupees."

Unfortunately Mr. Brooke's reply is not forthcoming.

Mr. Young's grievances did not end here, for we next find him complaining that his gomashta at Daudnagar had reported that Hyder Cooly Khan, the Jagirdar of that place, had wrongfully confined one of his principal opium raiyats, and beaten and turned away the people sent to demand his release. He concludes: "The said Hyder Cooly Khan has of his own authority caused proclamation to be made for bidding coolies, poladars, and dandies from giving their attendance at the *Cooty*. It would be superfluous in me to trouble you with any strictures on such conduct in one who, while he derives an affluent support from the bounty of the Company, has the presumption and ingratitude publicly to oppose their business."

SMUGGLING.

It appears from this correspondence that opium smuggling was almost extensive in 1781—85 as it is now. The law on this subject is

expounded by Mr. Young in his letter of the 4th of October 1781, when he reports the seizure of 15 seers of contraband opium at Dinapore, and eight maunds in the streets of Patna, which was being conveyed in a hackney from pargana Phulwarry.

"The Hon'ble Governor-General and Council in their orders of the 18th of August and 1st November 1775 directed that, on proof of any person making advances for opium, or purchasing from the raiyats, or having opium in his possession, such person is to be seized and his opium to be confiscated; which orders they repeat in their letter of the 18th of March 1776, and direct that they be carried into execution with the utmost rigour; and which were all ratified and confirmed on the commencement of the present contract, and still remain in force." On the 10th of May 1782, in reporting the arrest of Gopaul Pykar for clandestinely purchasing opium from the cultivators, he requests that "he may be imprisoned and kept so during the present contract; for he is an old offender, and if allowed to remain at large will, I am convinced, return to his former practices."

CHAPTER VIII.

Customs and Prices-current.

There were two custom houses in Bihar—one at Patna, and the other on the frontier at Chowsa. There are no figures showing the receipts and expenditure under this head; but from the correspondence it appears that prior to the 16th October 1783, there was an import duty levied by Government on all grain imported into the Bihar Province. On the above date these duties were removed, but from the 1st July 1784 they were reimposed. The rates of duty are not stated. The rahadarry dues levied by zamindars were redeclared illegal on the 6th June 1781, under the plan for the management of the customs which I have already quoted.

SALT.

From certain returns submitted by the Collector of Customs at Patna, it appears that in July 1781 there were two kinds of salt in use in Bihar. Coast salt of three kinds sold that month for Rs. 2-5, 2-4 and 2-2 per maund respectively; but in October of that year the prices had risen to Rs. 2-14, 2-12, and 2-10 respectively. The import of coast salt in July was nil, and apparently this salt fell entirely out of use, for the return for May 1782 and subsequent returns show the column for coast salt blank, with no balance in stock. On the other

hand, the import and export of Bengal salt rapidly increased, and the price also rose. The following figures are given in the returns, and are quoted, as they might from an economic point of view be valuable in connection with the question whether the raising of the salt duty has increased or decreased the consumption of this great necessary of life in Bihar.

Price-current of salt per maund.

COAST SALT.

		1st quality.	2nd quality.	3rd quality
April 1781	...	2 5 0	2 4 0	2 2 0
October 1781	...	2 14 0	2 12 0	2 10 0
May 1782	...	Nil	Nil	Nil
August 1782	...	Nil	Nil	Nil

BENGAL SALT.

April 1781	...	2 8 0	2 6 6	2 5 0
October 1781	...	3 4 0	3 2 0	2 15 0
May 1782	...	2 15 0	2 13 0	2 11 0
August 1782	...	3 4 0	3 1 6	3 0 6

COAST SALT.

		Import. Mds.	Export. Mds.	Balance. Mds.
April 1871	...	Nil	1,280	3,409
October 1781	...	Nil	5,150	2,249
May 1782	...	Nil	5,150	2,249
August 1782	...	Nil	5,150	2,249

BENGAL SALT.

April 1781	...	3,405	7,311	64,914
October 1781	...	8,185	13,785	13,742
May 1782	...	16,220	10,105	79,591
August 1782	...	950	27,152	41,451

The remarkable increase in the import of Bengal salt, though its price rose nearly by ¼th, ought to prove that the raising of the salt duty in a country where the material condition of a people is rapidly improving is not such a burden on the poor as some writers would have us believe. These figures may safely be compared with those of the present day. No doubt the "export," in these figures, included both "issue" from store, for consumption locally, and distribution to other adjacent provinces. There can be no better indication of prosperity

than an increase in the consumption of salt, notwithstanding an increase in its price, among a people who are obliged to regulate the consumption of necessaries by the scanty earnings of labour. Bihar is undoubtedly as much a labour-producing province as an agricultural one.

PRICES-CURRENT OF FOOD-GRAINS

The following returns of medium prices-current of different kinds of grain in Bihar in 1781-82 are taken from the custom house returns, and will, for economic purposes, be both interesting and valuable.

The figures are given in seers per rupee. Two years' figures are given. They were "average" years:—

		April 1781.		August 1782.	
		Sr.	ch.	Sr.	ch.
Rice ...	*Bansmatty*, Old 1st quality	31	8	34	12
	„ „ 2nd „ ...	33	4	35	12
	„ New 1st „ ...	34	8	38	8
	„ „ 2nd „ ...	36	0	44	8
„ ...	*Atub* Old 1st „ ...	37	12	50	0
	„ „ 2nd „ ...	38	4	51	0
	„ New 1st „ ...	49	8	52	8
	„ „ 2nd „ ...	52	8	54	8
„ ...	*Sellah*, Old 1st „ ...	55	0	63	8
	„ „ 2nd „ ...	56	0	65	8
	„ New 1st „ ...	57	0	66	8
	„ „ 2nd „ ...	58	0	67	8
„ ...	*Lalki* (Red) 1st „ ...	59	0	68	8
	„ 2nd „ ...	61	0	69	8
	„ 3rd „ ...	62	0	72	4
Paddy ...	Old 1st sort	95	12	115	4
„ ...	„ 2nd „	97	0	117	4
„ ...	New 1st „	106	0	124	8
„ ...	„ 2nd „	111	0	129	8
Wheat ...	(Gehun) Old 1st quality ...	56	12	55	8
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	58	0	57	0
„ ...	New 1st „ ...	60	4	59	8
Wheat ...	New 2nd quality... ...	63	0	64	8
Barley ...	„ (Jau) 1st „	125	12	124	8
„ ...	„ 2nd „	127	8	130	8
Maize ...	*Jenera*	116	12	133	4
„ ...	*Bhuttah* (Indian-corn) ...	125	8	109	8
Peas ...	*Arhar*, 1st quality ...	100	0	84	4
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	105	8	89	4
„ ...	*Arhar Dal*, 1st „ ...	59	0	59	8

		April 1781.		August 1782.	
		Sr.	ch.	Sr.	ch.
Peas ...	*Arhar Dal* 2nd quality ...	62	0	61	2
„ ...	*Khesaari* 1st „ ...	161	8	179	4
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	167	8	184	8
„ ...	*Khessari Dal*	156	4	159	4
„ ...	*Cabully Mattar*, 1st quality...	116	8	119	4
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	124	0	131	8
„ ...	Gram, (Boont) 1st „ ...	100	12	72	4
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	104	0	79	4
„ ...	*Maskallai* 1st „ ...	82	8	84	8
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	86	0	0	0
„ ...	*Kala Moong*, 1st „ ...	45	12	59	8
„ ...	„ 2nd „ ...	48	4	61	8
„ ...	*Massoor*	106	12	120	0
„ ...	„ *Dal*	71	12	94	8
Oil-seeds	*Tissi*	72	0	100	0
	Mustard (Sarson) 1st quality...	60	12	49	12
	„ 2nd „ ...	62	4	52	4
	Castor (Rendi)	65	0	78	4
	Til ...	49	0	59	12
Other grains...	(Poshta dana) Poppyseed ...	46	0	50	0
	Kurthi	126	4	107	8
	Kodo rice	87	0	89	8
	Kuddu	159	4	79	0
	Bhendy	65	0	...	
	Sowah	159	2	159	0
	„ rice	102	4	111	8
	Betwas	108	12	106	8
	Toorey	66	0	67	8
	Brinjie	96	0	99	8
	Maruwa, 1st quality	106	0	129	8
	„ 2nd „	114	4	139	0
	Salampore Dana	71	0	92	0
	„ *Satto*	62	12	71	8

The above prices appear rather startling; but they do not truly indicate the advance in agricultural prosperity on the one hand, or the increase in cost of living on the other, when compared with the returns of the present period. It is essential that in discussing such figures, due regard be had to the fact that, while the cost of cultivation has increased, the income of all classes has quadrupled in some cases, and doubled in all others, within the last 100 years. If the labouring man

finds his food twice as dear as it was a century back, at least he is saved the loss which the disposal of his cheap surplus grain entailed in days when all wages were paid in grain. Now they are always paid in cash, except in the one instance of agricultural labour.

The substitution of cash is a gain in every respect, except in the rupee's purchasing power of food. Relatively the wages are now very much higher, for it is the tendency of all skilled and unskilled labour to regulate its value, *pari passu*, with the rise in the price of food and general cost of living. Unskilled labour, which was valued at five pice per day one hundred years ago, is now valued at eight to twelve pice by the daily rate, and, under the system of contract work, which did not exist one hundred years ago, the income is capable of rising to twelve annas a day on our roads, canals, railways, and other large works employing unskilled labour. In all our large cities, coolies earn on an average four annas a day, and some times even more.

In these days a handicraftsman earns from four annas to eight annas a day, according to the locality and nature of the work, while industrial art is opening out a wide field of employment to classes of artists who were rapidly dying out. If therefore a man pays more now for his food, he also earns more than his ancestors did; and all that he earns in excess of the actual requirements of food, he expends in living more comfortably, dressing more expensively, and indulging to a great degree in luxuries, such as liquor and tobacco, and even tea and coffee, which were either unknown or sparingly used by his ancestors.

But the gain is not so much from the increase in the rate of wages as from the greater and more constant demand for both skilled and unskilled labour, which the progress of art, science, trade, commerce, and industry, and the increased wants of a higher condition of civilized life, has created within the last half century of our era. The middle classes in India have been opened out spheres of employment in public and private offices, in law courts, and in professions and trades, which did not exist before the advent of the English.

All this has, by increasing the field of employment, quadrupled the income of the people; for whereas agriculture was one hundred years ago the chief occupation and very nearly the sole occupation of 85 per cent. of the population, it is at present being equalled by the rapidly increasing expansion of spheres of employment unconnected with agriculture.

Thus, though the area of cultivation has increased year by year, the population depending solely on that means of gaining a livelihood has year by year decreased, relieving the congestion of the over-populated agricultural areas, which in former days intensified the ravages of famine and disease, and the evils which followed in their wake.

No doubt our rent laws have resulted in raising the cost of cultivation by enhancing the rate of rent; but even here it is doubtful if the

modern rent rate is very much higher than the old rates, to which were added an indefinite list of "abwabs." The old "abwabs" were fixed on a sliding scale of one-quarter, or "*Sewai*"; one-half, or "*Deyari*"; two-thirds, or "*Satsuki*"; double or "*Dooni*"; and two-and-a-half times, or "*Arhaigooni*," of the asal or fixed rate. These asal or fixed rates, which in Shahabad survive as the "*Gujasta*" or "past," in contradiction to the present or current rates of the post decennial era, are seldom found less than a rupee per biggah, while a rate exceeding Rs. 3 per biggah for similar neighbouring lands is at least unusual, though not unknown.

But if the cost of production has increased in the agricultural world, the value of the produce has certainly doubled, as is evidenced by these figures. In former days the fluctuations in the prices of country produce were abnormal and sudden. There was no outlet for the surplus produce in a good year, and more mouths to feed than grain in bad year; so that a bumper season meant financial ruin to the cultivator, by abnormally reducing prices in an over-glutted market, while a bad year meant starvation to an overcrowded population.

But all this is changed now; the expansion of trade and commerce and the facilities of cheap and rapid transit have provided markets for the surplus produce at remunerative prices, while providing against the possibility of a repetition of those awful famine visitations, which depopulated provinces in former days, and turned populous and prosperous areas into howling wildernesses in which men and beasts struggled for supremacy and existence. Rapid and cheap inter-provincial communication has relieved the congestion of overpopulated tracts, by fostering emigration, and enables the ordinary operations of supply and demand to provide for the necessities of any famine-stricken tract.

Even in the case of the agricultural labourer, who has ever been in India the *adscriptus glebæ*, existing but not living, whose sole wealth was half a yard of waistcloth, and whose happiness was complete at getting enough food to keep body and soul together, even in his case, the last century has brought emancipation from the system of generations of serfdom, and though his condition is still deplorable, it has vastly improved. Who, with official experience in India, does not know of the cruelty and tyranny which marked the life, for generations, of that patient class of agricultural servants called "Harwahas," who were, and are still in remote places, considered and treated by their masters as slaves—aye, hereditary bondsmen? Thanks to our equal laws and the vigilance of the English executive, this system of slavery has nearly ceased to exist, and emigration has done much to relieve the position of the agricultural labourer, while the increased demand for his services promises in time to do more to better his lot. Even now the cry goes up that field labour is scarce and the demand for wages higher.

I might appropriately close this subject by two short extracts from the old correspondence, which will partly bear out my remarks.

Extract from letter, dated 27th September 1783, from Mr. Brooke to the Committee of Revenue.

"In my letter of the 29th ultimo I pointed out to you the unfavourableness of the season for want of rain, as well as the dearness of all sorts of grain. I am sorry to acquaint you that these evils have been daily increasing to a very alarming degree. We have not had a drop of rain for these five weeks past, and there is a great seeming want of grain; so much so that it is difficult to get 20 seers of coarse rice for a rupee. I think it my duty to state these facts to you, that you might take such measures as shall to your judgment appear most salutary. Should the grain continue to grow scarce, at the rate it has risen in price for some days past, the distress of the poor natives will be great indeed; and we cannot expect any supplies from the westward, as the want of rain in that quarter has, if possible, been more severely felt than in these provinces."

Extract from letter dated 27th June 1786 from Mr. Brooke to the Committee of Revenue.

"The uncommon cheapness of all sorts of grain this year has been a great loss to the farmers and raiyats."

Whilst I am on this subject I will add that from these papers it appears that a famine raged in Madras in the year 1782, and subscriptions were started in Bengal and Bihar for the relief of the "poor natives" of that presidency. The Patna list of subscribers gives the names of thirteen European residents who subscribed between them Rs. 3,150. Mr. Brooke and two other gentlemen each subscribed Rs. 500. Truly the early English were princes in liberality.

CHAPTER IX.

Post Office.

The speed and regularity of postal communication in 1781 is strikingly illustrated by the despatch which marked the disposal of official correspondence. Letters despatched from Patna were generally replied to from Calcutta on the third or fourth day. The postal system then was much the same as that which existed in England down to the year 1840, when Rowland Hill's reform of uniform postage was introduced. In India, as in England, we find the postage recovered on

delivery, according to a tariff on letters of the kinds called "single," "double," and "treble." That is, a letter without enclosures was charged at single rates, and those with enclosures at "double," "treble," or "quadruple" rates according to weight. The tariff and weights for letters sent into the mofussil are not given, but the following abstract of a postal regulation, dated the 25th of April 1781, will, perhaps, be interesting:—

Letters in the public service could be franked by privileged officers, who received a bill at the end of the month from the Postmaster-General, which they checked by their register of letters despatched by post.

Collectors and Commanding Officers were authorized to employ "cossids" for the conveyance of urgent despatches, or, when the necessities of the service required a more than ordinary despatch by water, or the bulk of the papers to be sent occasioned packets to be sent by express conveyance, they were to be directed to the Governor-General and Council, or the Secretary of the department concerned, or the Commander-in-Chief.

No private "cossid" or private boat, or other conveyance, was to be employed for carrying private correspondence. The following was the scale of charges in Calcutta on English letters:—

"Single" letter, half anna; "double" letter, one anna; "treble" letter, one-and-half-anna; and so on. For up-country letters we are told the ordinary rates were to be charged, but these rates are not given. No letter could be delivered without a receipt, and on no account were letters to be delivered to "strangers" calling for them at the office. Breach of the above rules entailed "punishment," description not stated, and destruction of the letter seized.

CHAPTER X.

Currency.

This correspondence shows very clearly the financial depression which existed in the years 1781—85. There were several reasons for this, among which I might note—(1) unsatisfactory condition of the currency; (2) scarcity of specie; (3) want of confidence in the money market; (4) stagnation of trade and agriculture; (5) want of a market for export of country produce. There was also the incessant drain on the exchequer to support a large army in the field in Southern and Central India. These conditions, by reacting on the land revenue, intensified the financial crisis to such a degree in Bihar, that over and over again the Revenue chief found himself unable to meet even the

ordinary demands of the State. The brigade at Dinapore, and the garrison at Chitra, the Commercial chief, the Opium contractor, the Judge of the Dewani Adalut, and the Accountant-General in Calcutta, were all loud in their demands for money from an exhausted treasury. Collectors borrowed from each other, but that was merely shifting the evil from one district to another. In regard to the currency, some interesting facts regarding this subject have been given in the chapter on opium.

There was a variety of coin, belonging to a variety of mints, and of different periods—all of different values in the market. The two kinds of silver coin then in use were the "Sicca" and the "Sunnat"; but there were the "Siccas" of Calcutta, Murshedabad, and Patna, of different years and of different market values; while the "Sunnats," which were largely coined in the Patna and Benares Mints, were also of different kinds and values. The mints at Patna and Murshedabad were closed with the object of introducing a uniform currency, and this measure in the end had the effect of causing greater stability and confidence in the money market. The correspondence shows that the merchants and shroffs of Patna tried to get the mint re-established there, but very properly failed. Another great reform about this period was the coinage of copper pice as a medium of legal exchange in addition to the cowrie. On the 24th of September 1781 the Government advertized its intention of establishing a copper coinage, and simultaneously issued copper coins of the denominations called (1) "Madosir," 32 to a Sicca rupee, equal in value to 160 cowries; (2) "Faloos," 64 to a Sicca rupee, equal to 80 cowries; (3) "Neem Faloos," 128 to a Sicca rupee, equal to 40 cowries; (4) "Pau Faloos," 256 to a Sicca rupee, equal to 20 cowries. These coins were sold at the rate of eighty Sicca rupees per maund of eighty sicca weight.

It was also determined to receive pice at the treasury, when tendered in payment of dues, to the proportion of ten rupees in every thousand. Pice, when received in or paid from the treasury, was to be weighed if the amount exceeded half a maund in weight. The advertisement concluded: "And in order to establish it as a necessary division of a Sicca rupee, and a convenient medium between silver and cowries in the purchase of the common necessaries of life, the Governor-General and Council direct that the copper coin be received and paid according to the relative value, fixed in the annexed table, of copper to cowries, without any discount or 'batta' whatever, which, however, is not to influence or affect the bazar price of cowries, in any other manner than in the exchange of one for the other." On the 5th of April 1782 the Revenue chief at Patna received fifty maunds of copper pice, valued at Rs. 4,000. The introduction of the smaller pice did not meet with popular favour; and even now, after the lapse of a century, Government

has been unable to oust the unstamped blocks of copper called "Lohaiya" and "Gurruckpuri" pice, which continue to be the media of commercial intercourse in Bihar. Writing on the 11th of May 1786, Mr. Brooke says: "The large pice was disposed of some time ago, for which credit has been given in my treasury accounts, but the shroffs and people of the bazar positively refuse to receive the smaller sort."

It appears from a return appended to this letter that up to the end of February 1786, or in five months, the sales amounted to Rs. 25,200 double, and Rs. 2,695 smaller pice, leaving a balance of Rs. 16,434 smaller pice. The sale of double pice was certainly large, and much larger than it is now in twelve months. Indeed, the so-called "double" pice is never issued now, and is being fast recalled, which is perhaps a pity, for it was more popular than the smaller copper coins. The current rupee of the period was the "Sicca" of the Calcutta Mint.

CHAPTER XI.

The Treasury.

The Patna Treasury was located in a wing of the Havilly Begum; and the establishment allowed for it has been stated in a previous chapter. The establishment proved inadequate, and Mr. Maxwell submitted a strong representation on the subject. It appears the allowance for treasury establishment at the time of the Patna Council was Rs. 775 Sunnat; and Mr. Maxwell pleaded hard to be allowed even half that sum; for, as he remarks, the business transacted was "in every respect as complicated and troublesome as formerly."

It is to be noted that the unfortunate treasury Fotadars or "poddars" have had no amelioration in their condition within the last century, for they still draw Rs. 7 per month, though they have lakhs and lakhs of rupees passing monthly through their hands; and are required now, not only to receive, pay, and test coin, but to keep up a very bothersome kind of slip account, which is the basis of the treasurer's cash account, day by day. Let us hope these unfortunate men will receive more generous treatment shortly, for the slightest mistake they make falls on their shoulders, and has to be made good either by them or by the treasurer.

It appears that in 1781 Jagat Set was the Company's banker in Calcutta, but in 1782 the house of Gopal Das and Hurry Kissen Das was appointed in his place.

The correspondence is full of complaints from the Revenue chief of the want of cash in his treasury to meet the several demands coming in. Once it is the army that goes without its pay for months; at

another time it is the Opium contractor who has to wait two or three months for an advance; then the Commercial chief, or the Judge of Dewani Adalat, and so on. The treasury was what we should now call a deficit treasury, *i.e.*, the expenditure was greater than the receipts; but in the present day rapid communication enables the Accountant-General to provide for even sudden emergencies by a rapid concentration of silver at deficit centres. In 1781—85, however, the only communication was by water, which was both tedious and expensive.

The difficulty of transporting silver by country boats gave rise to the system of drawing and accepting bills on native merchants and bankers. This carried with it two inherent evils; it caused loss by the failure of houses, by their inability to meet heavy drawings without notice; and it caused a further depletion in the money market, which already was hard up for cash. Another evil was the alarming increase of forged signatures on these native bills. In another respect the finances were subject to loss by the practice of accepting pawts, or bills, and promissory notes in payment of the revenue. These pawts were constantly being dishonoured; and as it was the custom to treat pawts in the accounts as ready money, the acceptance of such bills drawn at long dates threw the accounts into hopeless confusion, when, as frequently occurred, the pawts were dishonoured; or, as it was called, protested.

Besides, the system led to a deceptive condition of the balance. On Mr. Maxwell's death, in 1781, Mr. Ross discovered his real balance was more than seven lakhs short of the accounts, for this sum really represented pawts and notes, either dishonoured or not yet due. We have in several previous extracts seen references made to dishonoured bills and promissory notes paid in by farmers, and I might go on multiplying cases, but I will now content myself with only three.

In July 1780, the house of Ram Churn Sow and Gopal Churn Sow dishonoured a bill drawn on them for Rs. 53,619-4-9; out of this the Provincial Council recovered only Rs. 40,389-8 from the drawers.

Again, in September 1780, the house of Ram Kissen and Lachmi Narain at Calcutta failed just at the time that a bill for Rs. 45,151, drawn by their partner, Ram Sow, at Patna, was due; subsequently Rs. 7,993-12-9 was recovered and bonds to the sum of Rs. 16,482-11-3 tendered in part payment. The Government had to institute legal proceedings on these bonds in the Dewani Adalat; and they appear to have in one of these cases got a decree against, and attached and sold the house of, one Roy Saduram. This house the Company purchased for rupees ten thousand; but as the debt of Roy Saduram to Ram Sow only amounted to Rs. 9,127-10, the Company had to pay the judgment-debtor Rs. 1,022-6, and Court's commission of Rs. 150. When it was attempted to sell this house, it transpired that Mr. Revil, the Collector of Customs, had a prior mortgage on it for a

debt of Rs. 15,000 due to him. So that the Government were double losers by this unfortunate transaction.

The third case was connected with the Danish Chief at Patna. This gentleman drew a bill for Rs. 30,000 in favour of the Collector of Saran, on the Chief and Council of Fredericknagore; but on presentation the bill was dishonoured, as the Patna Chief (Danish) had no power to draw on the Fredericknagore Chief for more than Rs. 9,000. Fortunately in this case there was no loss, owing to Mr. Grome's sagacity.

In regard to the forging of signatures, it appears from this correspondence that in April 1782, one Golam Ashraf, late of Pandua, forged the signature of Nawab Mahomed Reza Khan, and the seal of the daroga of the Adalat at Hooghly, and obtained a large sum of money from the *Khalsa* at Calcutta. A reward of Rs. 5,000 was offered for his apprehension.

Again, one Ram Chandra Sircar, on forged vouchers, obtained a large amount from the *Khalsa*, and a reward of Rs. 1,000 was offered for his arrest.

In regard to the "pawts," Mr. Brooke, writing to the Committee of Revenue on the 23rd of February 1784, explained that the system of receiving these bills, and treating them as cash in the accounts, had existed for the last 12 years, and he concludes: "Besides the present general scarcity of specie, which operates more particularly through this province, renders this mode more essentially necessary now than ever. If this indulgence was not granted, and Government should insist on ready money immediately after the expiration of the month, most of the farmers would be under confinement in the Havilly Begum, and an entire stop to the collection of the revenue would be the natural consequence. But if it is your pleasure that all the kists should be paid in ready money, I beg you will favour me with your particular orders on the subject expressive of the exact period each kist shall be paid after the expiration of the month, and the conduct to be observed to the aumils in case of failure." Nevertheless, it appears from these papers that so far back as the 22nd November 1781, the Committee of Revenue had expressly prohibited the very practice which, Mr. Brooke contends, had been in force for 12 years.

There was another very serious flaw in the system of accounts. The revenue accounts, or tauzi, were kept according to the Fasli year; but as the Bihar Fasli and the Bengal Fasli years are different, the accounts of Bihar were often prepared for periods different from those of other provinces. For instance, in 1782, "Chyt," in Bengal, ended on the 10th April, whereas in Bihar it ended on the 29th March. Then, again, the Bihar year began in Assin or 6th September, whereas the Bengal year began in Jeyt. It was some time before the Committee

of Revenue could understand the peculiarity of the Bihar year with its intercalary month.

CHAPTER XII.

Revenue Free Estates.

The revenue free estates of zamindars, which comprised the bulk of their "property," were very extensive in Bihar; but they also held certain permanent tenures, called "Mokarari," which were included in the term "Zamindary."

The *Nankar*, or revenue free lands, such as *Altumgah*, *Jaghire*, *Maddatmash*, *Malikana*, *Sesschikon*, &c., were included in what were designated "Huzzoori" or Royal lands; while other lands were classed under the designation of "Nizamat" or settled lands. The zamindar's freehold was, however, in accordance with the feudal law of India, held not absolutely, but conditionally. He was debarred from alienating his permanent tenure as well as his free tenure, and he held both under conditions of feudal service to the Paramount Power; these services were both administrative and martial.

The Paramount Power could sell these tenures for balance of revenue or confiscate them for misconduct; but the zamindar could not mortgage or sell them without the sanction of the Government. The official neglect or disobedience of the zamindar of orders sent by authority of Government, or resistance to the processes of Court, the failure to suppress crime, the illegal collection of tolls and customs and many other offences of commission or omission, rendered the tenure of the zamindar forfeit to the Crown; while his personal complicity in any case of murder, robbery, or breach of the peace, entailed the extreme penalty of death. This will be made clear further on.

What I wish to point out here is that the free and permanent tenures of the zamindars, talukdars, and chaudhries, the three recognized gradations of landholders in 1781—85, formed their real estates, which remained in their possession when, for fiscal purposes, they lost the management of other *Nizamat* portions of their charges or districts. These were farmed out by Government to renters and sub-renters called aumils, the zamindar receiving an annuity of 10 per cent. on the collections as his share of the profits, no doubt, partly as a recompense for his official supervision of the revenue affairs of his district. It was always his duty to look after the transactions of the aumils, to check abuses, and protect and encourage the raiyats.

In one of his letters Mr. Brooke complains that the practice of allowing zamindars to commute their malikana allowance into rent-free grants of land resulted in their neglecting to improve the nizamat lands, from which they could derive no further profit. It was their

duty to encourage the increase of cultivation in nizamat lands: but they apparently offered better terms to the raiyats and got them to settle on their freeholds. The fundamental principle of landed property, or rent-free lands, was one of feudal service. From the royal house to the humble village watchman, the system was the same.

CHAPTER XIII.

Feudal Tenures.

In Rockhill's Life of Budha it is stated, on the authority of the Dulva, that the word "Kshetriya" implied the Guardian or "Protector of the fields." It was the title of the first Civil Magistrate, whom the necessities of sinful man brought into existence for the suppression of thefts and settlement of disputes. The old Kshetrapas, or Satraps, from civil magistrates became provincial governors, and ultimately kings; but the feudal system continued the same, though enlarged and expanded. The head of a family became the head of the clan; the federation of clans necessitated a tribal chief; the federation of tribes gave rise to territorial chiefs; the federation of territorial chiefs, whether by consent or as the result of conquest, led to the creation of a king.

A "zamindar," like a "Kshetrapa" or satrap, was a territorial chief or baron in primitive times, deriving his authority from the federal council of the tribes, but in more modern times holding his fief directly from the crown. This same feudal system is in existence to this day among the aboriginal races of Sontalia and Chota Nagpur, where the territorial chiefs of the *Parhas*, called parganites in Sontalia, chaudhuries in the Kymore, and mankies in Hazaribagh, retain their service freeholds, called "mân" or "bhuihari" lands.

The next gradation is of desh mangies or talukdars; while the head of the clan or village is variously named manghi, mahato, makaddam, &c. The word chaudhry was originally a patronymic of the Kurmi-Kharwar race. It first became the title of a headman, and then of a territorial chief. In the Kymore it is used still in all these different senses.

In the so-called Aryan tracts, the old feudal system is fast dying out, and in places has left no trace behind; but there are localities where the feudal system of service in exchange for rent-free lands is still in force; and in these localities we find the *Mundals*, *Chaukidars*, *Goraits*, *Kotals*, *Halsahanas*, *Chukladars*, *Semandars*, *Kahars*, *Chamars*, *Lohars*, *Chutars*, *Kumhars*, *&c.*, in possession of rent-free grants for services rendered to the ruler and the people. In all these cases, however, tithes are also levied from the cultivators.

That the Permanent Settlement made a vast difference in the position and status of the zamindar will be evident to any one who has followed

this narrative of the early administration of Bihar. It did more; it completely destroyed the old feudal system of Bihar.

The following extract will show the limited right of zamindars in what was their permanent revenue-paying estates.

A letter dated the 31st May 1782, from the Governor-General in Council, says: "It is an original and immemorial law of the constitution of these provinces that no zamindar or other landholder paying revenue to Government shall be permitted to alienate his lands without the express authority of Government; and as this law has been confirmed and enforced by repeated publications on the part of the Governor-General and Council, we approve of the step taken by you in the instance before us, and strictly enjoin you to prevent every attempt to defeat it, under whatever authority, by expelling the persons who shall attempt to usurp the possession; and proceeding against them as disturbers of the peace in every case of opposition, and either replacing the lands in the possession and charge of the original proprietor, or appointing aumils, or other officers, on behalf of the Company and of the proprietor." Here the reference is to revenue-paying lands, but I have in previous chapters shown by quotations that the Government, even in the case of jaghires, or free lands of zamindars, disputed their right to mortgage them without its previous consent; and where such mortgages existed, it refused to recognize them.

CHAPTER XIV.

Permanent Tenures.

MOKARARIS.

The "mokarry" tenures were often very extensive, as in the case of Tirhut; the whole of that Sircar being permanently settled with Raja Madhoo Singh. There were many parganas also settled permanently with zamindars, such as Powarrah in Shahabad, and half the parganas of Sandeh and Ballia. There were also permanently-settled "taluqs," such as the taluqs of Digbejoy Singh in Shahabad.

It will be interesting to note here the income derived by one zamindar, Madhu Singh, from malikana and dusturat fees in one year. The figures are taken from the canungoes' papers of 1188 F. S.—

			Rs.
In nizamat mehals	...	...	20,165
In huzzary mehals	...	...	29,589
In mehals nankar	...	...	4,775
	Total	...	54,529

The above are made up of items under the following heads:—

		Rs.	A.	P.
Saddoochee at 2 per cent.	...	5,788	0	0
Aikanny at 1 anna per rupee	...	15,296	5	6
Surraydih or russoom at Rs. 3 per village ...	...	4,998	11	6
Dustoor turrufkhas ...	...	1,500	0	0
Malikana ...	...	12,458	6	0
On mokararis ...	...	2,937	14	3
Dustoor makaddam ...	...	5,865	12	6
Do. mohurir ...	...	934	0	6
Sair surraff and Puskye	...	4,749	13	6

There were apparently complete records kept in the duftars, or offices of the canungoes and amanat darogas, of all the revenue-free estates in Bihar. The following quotation is interesting from more points than one.

A letter dated the 14th April 1783, from Mr. Brooke to the Committee of Revenue, says:—

"I think it my duty to point out to you that the public revenue suffers very considerably from the number of jagirs, &c., in these provinces. The *jagirdars* grant greater indulgences to their raiyats than the farmers can possibly do, by which means the jagirs are extremely well cultivated, while the *Nizamat* lands lie waste for want of a sufficient number of raiyats."

JAGIRS OF BIHAR.

Some idea of the extent of the so-called jagirs or free estates of zamindars and others might be obtained, when I mention that the nankar lands of Raja Akbar Ally, which Government confiscated after his rebellion, comprised 11 villages. The estate of Nawab Muneer-ul-Dowla, also rent-free, was scattered over five parganas, and aggregated 8,167,878 "dams."

The rent-free estate of Mirza Abdulla comprised the two parganas of Rotehut and Puchrota, on the confines of Champaran, then part of Sircar Saran. The free estate of Maharaja Rajbullub amounted to 7,500,000 "dams;" and comprised several "mehals" in pargana Nagurbassi. The jagir of Mir Butchoo in Sasaram aggregated 160,000 "dams," and we find the Emperor Shah Alum directing the restoration of this estate to his son Mahommed Khan, when it was resumed by the Company on the death of his father.

CHAPTER XV.

Crime and Police.

I have stated before that the Fouzdari was under the Civil Judge, whose official title was Superintendent of the Dewani and Fouzdari Adalats. The City Magistrate of Patna was Mr. Mercer. Mr. Barlow officiated for him when he became Judge at that station. The Fouzdari Courts appear to have employed sepoys for the purpose of arresting criminals in the Mufassal, but the thief catchers in the mufassal were the zamindars and farmers or renters. They not only caught, but tried, criminals during the Mahammadan *régime;* and indeed, before our Government was established, their legal powers extended to punishment only just short of death. The kotwals and rural police were under their authority. In the period to which these papers refer, they were entirely responsible for the crime within their executive charges; and in this connection the following quotation will be of interest:—

"Whereas the peace of these Provinces has been greatly disturbed through the negligence or connivance of the zamindars, it is hereby ordered and proclaimed that all zamindars, chaudhries and talukdars, and other proprietors of land, do, conformably to the original and fundamental tenure on which they hold their zamindaries or other portions of landed property, take effective care that no robberies, burglaries, or murders be committed within their districts, and that they do their utmost to bring all offenders to justice; that they do erect thanas in such places as shall be pointed out to them by the Magistrates, and be answerable for the good behaviour of thanadars and other officers appointed thereto, and for the punctual obedience of all orders issued to them from the Magistrates. And it is hereby declared that if any robbery be committed, the zamindar to whose district the robbers appertain, or in whose district the robbery shall be committed, according to the circumstance of the case, shall be made to refund the amount stolen. But if any zamindar shall either commit, or connive at, any murder, robbery, or other breach of the peace, and it be proved against him, he shall be punished with death. And if any zamindar shall refuse or neglect to obey any orders issued under the authority of Government, he shall be punished as the nature of the case and the degree of the crime shall require."

It will be observed that in a previous notification it is lands that are described as the private property of zamindars which they cannot alienate without the sanction of Government, while in this notification it is districts that are in their charge. The word "zamindari" here is clearly, from its antithetical use to "district," different from it, thus:—"Do conformably to the original and fundamental tenure, on which they hold

their zamindaries, or other portions of their landed properties, take effective care that no robberies, burglaries or murders be committed within their districts." Here clearly zamindari and district are separate things; one is property and the other a charge. Now let us see how zamindars fulfilled their official duties under this very drastic law.

LAWLESS ZAMINDRAS.

Letter from Mr. Barlow, acting Magistrate or Fouzdar of Patna, to Mr. Charters, on special duty in Bihar, dated 3rd September 1782 :—

"I have the honour to enclose you a copy of a petition presented to me by Byroo Singh, zamindar of mauza Mahadew, pargana Sirris Cutumba, complaining against Narain Singh, zamindar of the said pargana, for murdering one of his brothers, wounding another brother and sister, and plundering and burning his house. The case of this Byroo Singh is particularly unfortunate, three of his brothers having been at different times murdered by the family of Narain Singh."

I make an extract from the memorial of Ahmed Ali Khan, renter of Shahabad, referred to in a previous part of this work :—

"Lately a very extraordinary circumstance has happened. Dhole Sing, the zamindar of pargana Dinnarah, attended with many followers, came into the cutcherry in the day time, released a number of malguzars who were in confinement for balances due to me, took away all the money then in the treasury, and after having killed five men and wounded thirteen more, who endeavoured to prevent the execution of his plan, went away with the people he had released, together with all the money he took from the cutcherry, into pargana Chowsa in Sircar Ghazipur. In consequence of this disturbance, the other malguzars of pargana Dinnarah discontinued paying their revenue, and there is an end of all order and management in that pargana. I wrote to Mr. Wordsworth, who wrote to me that he could not redress my grievance without an order from the Committee, as the people had gone into another zilla; nor do I know if any measures have been taken to punish the offenders.

On the 6th October 1782, Mr. Brooke writes to the Committee of Revenue :—

"Agreeably to your orders of the 29th August I have delivered over to the Fouzdarry Court Gunga Ram, the aumil of Sirissa, and his naib Munsaram, to be tried for robberies committed in that pargana."

On the 17th April 1782, Mr. Brooke writes to the Committee of Revenue :—

"I have been favoured with your letter, directing me to dismiss the aumil of Sirissa, and to dispossess the zamindar of Mythe, in consequence of Mr. Champain's representation of their bad conduct. You also direct that their lands be given to some other person whose zamindari may be

contiguous to theirs; and that I should apply to the Commanding Officer at Dinapore for such force as may be thought necessary to put the new zamindars in possession; but Mr. Champain not having corresponded with me on the subject, I have not been able to act so as to put your orders into execution; but I am now informed that Mr Champain has made an application to Sir John Cumming for a battalion of sepoys in order to apprehend the zamindar of Mythe."

Mr. Champain was Judge of Darbhanga. The charge against this zamindar is not disclosed, but apparently it was of a serious nature.

ROBBER BANDS.

The following extracts will show how rampant crime was. Sir John Cumming writes from Camp Chowsa, on the 16th May 1782, to Mr. Brooke:—

"Since my arrival here the camp has been every night under continual alarm from thieves, and scarcely a night passes without either officers, sepoys, or bazar people being robbed. It would be attended with fatal consequences were the sentries to be permitted to fire, the people being spread all over the ground, both in front and on the flanks of the camp, &c."

To this Mr. Brooke replied on the 20th idem:—

"I have been favoured with your letter of the 16th instant, and am sorry to hear of the robberies committed in your encampment. I have sent orders to Raja Bikramajit and Babu Bhup Narain Singh, the aumils of Shahabad, and you may depend on their taking every measure in their power to prevent the like inconvenience in future. Mr. Thomas Law being Judge of the Dewany and Fouzdarry Courts, you will of course send such offenders as may be apprehended to that gentleman."

On the 23rd October 1783, Mr. Brooke writes to Major Hardy: "The aumil of Nirhat Samoy having represented to me that many robberies are daily committed in his pargana by people from the hills, I think it necessary to send him a guard of 30 sepoys."

On the 15th June 1781, Mr. Grome, the Collector of Saran, complained to Mr. Maxwell of the prevalence of robberies on the Munneer road, which had caused great consternation to the merchants and others using that road.

The condition of things in 1785 was, however, remarkable. Patna, the centre of the Provincial administration, was in a state which in these days is hardly credible. In a petition dated the 23rd March 1785, the merchants and principal inhabitants of the city say: "The want of employment, and additional misfortunes which have constantly attended us, have reduced us almost to ruin; and on account of the reduction of Major Hardy's battalion, all the sepoys who were attached to the kotwalli, together with the guards at the gates and other parts of the city, have

been withdrawn. We are therefore in the most defenceless state, in consequence of which many robberies have been committed ; so much so that there is no safety for us or our families."

Mr. Brooke, on the 23rd of March 1785, writes: "I am sorry to observe that robberies have been very frequent of late, although every care has been taken to prevent them ; but the kotwalli establishment is by no means adequate for the protection of the city and suburbs. Such has been the fear of the inhabitants, for some time past, that they have confined themselves to their houses, as the thieves are very daring and go about in large bodies. I have therefore thought it my duty to continue some sepoys with the kotwal, and have placed guards at the gates and other parts of the city : in all about seventy-three sepoys."

Of Shahabad he writes on the 14th February 1786, to Mr. Lawrence Mercer, then acting as Judge at Patna: "The many robberies that have lately been committed at this place, and particularly a few nights ago when two travellers were plundered and dangerously wounded, induced me, in order to lessen the distress of the inhabitants and to give them confidence, to attend to their complaints; and as they pointed out to me several men of the *Dom* caste as notorious thieves, I despatched some of my people to apprehend them." He concludes: "As my interference with your office on this occasion evidently tends to the good of the community at large, I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken, and be so good as to send the thieves to the Fauzdarry for trial."

CHAPTER XVI.

Civil Administration.

There is not much information on this subject except regarding official squabbles between the Revenue chief and the Judges of the Civil Courts ; but the following information is given :—

Paragraph 14 of the Regulation of Justice in the Court of Mufassal Dewani Adalat and in the Court of the Sadar Dewany Adalat, 5th July 1781, says:—

"That the matter cognizable in the Mufassal Dewany Adalats, respect being had to their local jurisdiction, as is hereinafter described, shall be all complaints, causes, suits, claims, and disputes, concerning any zamindar's, talukdar's, and chowdhry's land or house, and concerning the inheritance or succession to the same, or their bounds and limits; or any right, title, claim, demand, interest, or lien to or in the same, or to the possession thereof, and concerning rents, debts, accounts, contracts, partnerships, sales of any property of any nature

whatever be the same, real or personal, and duties and demands whatsoever concerning the same; and all causes and disputes concerning marriage and caste."

Paragraph 18 says:—"That the powers and authorities hereby given and delegated, do in no wise extend to, or be construed to extend to or authorize, any Court of Mufassal Dewany Adalat, to entertain any suit or cause for any matter or thing, directly or indirectly relating to the public revenues, or any demand of Government on zamindars, talukdars, chowdhries or other landholders, farmers, muttahades, wadadars, securities, aumils, tahsildars, etmaundars, or others employed in the collections or in any wise responsible for the revenue; or any demands of zamindars, talukdars, chaudhries, or other landholders, farmers, muttahades, wadadars, securities, aumils, tahsildars, etmaundars, or other persons employed in the collections; or their under-farmers, malzamin, inferior landholders, and collectors, or others from whom rents or revenue have been immediately due to them; nor any demand for rent or russoom on persons employed in the collection of them officially, or hereditarily, in the different gradations downwards to the raiyat or immediate occupant of the soil; nor again in the same manner of any complaints of raiyats and persons of any of the above-mentioned denominations, against the person to whom they pay the revenue in the different gradations upwards; for irregular or undue exactions; nor for any oppression whatsoever; nor of or concerning any adjustments between zamindars, chowdhries, talukdars, or other landholders with their securities, farmers or wadadars, nor the claim of any securities and farmers on zamindars."

The following is an extract from the Subsidiary Regulation for the Administration of Civil Justice:—

"Para. II.—That if any zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry shall resist or cause to be resisted any process, order, rule, or decree, which shall at any time issue from the Courts of Sudder Dewany Adalat, on proof thereof being made on oath to the satisfaction of the Judge of that Court, from which such process, order, rule, or decree, shall have issued, such Court may and shall call on such zamindar to answer to such charge; and if such zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry, shall refuse or neglect to make answer to the same, or if, after answer given, and the hearing of such evidence as he may produce, it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the Court that he is guilty of such charge, the Court shall award and decree that such zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry do, from the time of the decree then made, forfeit his zamindary, talukdary, or other lands respectively, and every right and title which he and his heirs may have in or to the same. And if any such decree be made in any Court of Dewany Adalat, it shall be lawful for such zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry to appeal to the Sudder Dewany Adalat; and if the Sudder Dewany Adalat shall confirm the decree, or shall make

any original decree against any zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry, on account of any resistance made or caused to be made to any process, rule, order, or decree of the Sudder Dewany, it shall, within one month, transmit to the Governor-General and Council such decree, with all the proceedings relative thereto; and in case any zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry, against whom such decree shall be made in any Court of Dewany Adalat, shall not appeal against the same within the time limited for appeals, then the Court which shall have made such decree shall, within one month after the expiration of such limited time, transmit to the Governor-General and Council the said decree, with all the proceedings belonging thereto, provided always that such zamindar, talukdar, or chowdhry shall not be ousted or expelled from the possession of such zamindary, talukdary or other land, except by or in virtue of an order from the Governor-General and Council, confirming such decree, and ordering and directing the manner in which the same shall be carried into execution, and to whom the possession of such zamindary, talukdary, or other land, shall be delivered; and that it be competent to the Governor-General and Council, either to order such decree to be executed, or to change or commute forfeiture, for any sum of money which the Governor-General and Council shall deem adequate to the offence for which a decree had been given."

However, on the 21st of June 1782, in consequence of the Sheriff's peons, in execution of a decree, having attached and taken possession of "certain parcels of land" in the Mufassal, without any let or hindrance from the persons employed in the collection of revenue, a notification was issued warning them that any future neglect to take the means prescribed in existing orders for preventing such an encroachment of the judicial into the field of the Revenue administration would render them "responsible." It is not stated what the means were or what the nature of the responsibility would be; nor is it clear how to prevent a writ of attachment being served would carry immunity from the scope of the above regulation.

There is no information in these papers of the duties of the kazis or quizis in the Mufassal, though their existence is proved by the many references to them. As a rule, the kazis were employed in large towns and villages only, and they were Registrars of Deeds, Notaries Public, Civil and Criminal Judges, and in ancient times religious preceptors, or rather expounders of the Koran, and judges in religious disputes. They were purely Muhammadan officials; and probably with jurisdiction only over Muhammadan subjects. The zamindar's cutcherry, however, was the local tribunal of the Hindu population; and even to this day, though the Permanent Settlement has relieved the zamindar of all official duties he and his amla decide most of the village disputes; and when cases

do go into Court, they have, in the vast majority, been shaped and vitalised in the malik's cutcherry.

CHAPTER XVII.

Conclusion.

In writing this account of the early English administration of Bihar have been actuated by the desire of placing before the public, so far as possible in the words of the dead, a graphic account of the system of administration which we inherited from the Muhammadans on acquiring the dewani of Bihar. The picture is not a bright one; but it will be useful to compare it with Bihar in the Jubilee year of the Queen-Empress of Hindustan.

Then we find a small band of Englishmen struggling to grapple with and overcome the evils of a system which had grown with the life of the people, from the dawn of the Muhammadan *régime*. It was an attempt to reconcile two repugnant systems—that of the East and that of the West. Nevertheless, Hastings laid the foundation stone of the superb edifice of British administration which Lord Cornwallis built, and his successors have now improved nearly to perfection. More remains to be done; but rulers are not gods nor magicians that they can change the face of the world by a word or a touch.

Human character, with its prejudices and idiosyncrasies, cannot be changed in a day; nor can customs, usages, laws, and systems of Government be abolished by a stroke of the pen. What is true of individuals and communities is truer of nations, and the aggregation of rival races and creeds. The process of good government is necessarily slow. The cautious administrator proceeds gradually, and it is, perhaps, this very want of speed in the administrative coach which has saved it so far from an upset on the road of administrative reform.

Whatever may be the verdict of agitators who aim at upsetting British rule in India, and can see little to praise and much to condemn in all around, the mass of the people continue to appreciate the benefits they receive from the "Raj of the Sircar," and would be sorry to see it give place to another of any kind, make, or shape.

To many these notes will afford the best evidence in justification of that generous and far-sighted policy which conceived the Permanent Settlement, and raised the edifice of judicial reform, while few will fail to admit the benefits which have accrued both to the rulers and ruled from those measures.

It is a matter more of polemic interest than of practical importance in these days, whether zamindars were landholders of all that

Lord Cornwallis gave them, in 1793, as their private property in its English legal sense; but whether the Permanent Settlement was an act of mere justice or of princely generosity, the fact remains that the conditions of landed property now are such as to make that settlement the Magna Charta of the princes and landholders of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The zamindars of Bihar, from being the most lawless in the country, have come to be the most loyal and law-abiding, and though the martial spirit of the Rajput finds a vent now and again in an agrarian riot of a serious kind, acts of rebellion, such as that of Narain Singh and Akbar Ali, or the brigandage of Dhole Singh, have passed away for good; at any rate, we hope so.

To the vast mass of the people have been secured equal and just laws, personal freedom, independence and liberty, such as they never knew before; trade and commerce have developed and expanded, by sea, river, and land, with gigantic strides; the products of the West add to the material comforts of the East; the surplus of the East provides food for the West; the haunts of the tiger and elephant have been occupied and cleared, and now subscribe to the national wealth; canals supplement the deficient rainfall, and provide against famine; railroads and steamers have united the distant south with the far north, the arid west and the moist east; emigration has relieved overpopulation; competition has lowered prices. Merchants do not cry that ruin stares them in the face, for, unless they speculate wildly, their credit is good and business safe. Citizens do not live within locked doors for fear of marauders; specie is not scarce, though largely hoarded. Conservancy is not neglected in large centres of population, and those scourges which in former days laid populous and thriving cities in ruins, such as Gaur, are not possible in these days; medical aid, at all the centres of administration, has been provided; succour has been carried to the inmates of the zananas by female doctors; epidemics receive prompt and skilful treatment: hospitals alleviate suffering so far as human skill can do so.

Education has been fostered by a far reaching system, which embraces the rudimentary tuition of the humble village patsala, presided over by the unsophisticated *Guru Mahashai*, on the one hand, and the high scholastic education of affiliated Universities on the other, with a curriculum not far below the highest degree obtainable in the most advanced institutions of Europe, and with a staff of Professors drawn from the most advanced colleges of Great Britain.

Nor in this scheme for raising the intellectual capacity and high moral tone of the subject-races has the benevolent English Government forgotten the necessities of the neglected and captive women of British India; for, though it is not in the power of the Government to throw open the doors of the *Zananas*, it is feasible to emancipate the females

of India from the cruel social tyranny, which dooms them to life-long confinement; by educating and civilizing them, their brothers, and husbands, until the national sentiment shall awaken, to an appreciation of all that is good and noble, and a detestation of all that is wicked and ignoble, and the spirit of confidence, respect and love of freedom and justice shall have been instilled into the hearts of the people.

Nor in the onward march of intellect has the progress of religion and morality been entirely overlooked; for, though reasons of state-craft may require the strictest neutrality from Government in matters affecting the religious life of the people, humanity and christian piety have moved the English nation to provide the means of spreading the blessings and consolation of their true faith to the millions of India; and even as Budhistic India spread the Light of Asia from Japan to Mongolea, so Christian Europe is spreading the Light of the World from the north to the south pole.

If crime and misery are not less, at least they are well in hand. Rajas do not now languish in prison for rent, or at the caprice of a despotic Baron-in-chief. People, if not richer, have at least more comfortable homes, better food, and warmer clothes. Industries have expanded, and new fields of labour and employment opened out. Schools of technical art have been started, and museums and exhibitions provided both for tuition and recreation. Games and pastimes of the West now cheer the monotony of like of the great middle classes, for whom lucrative and congenial employment is provided in those institutions raised by the English which have now become part and parcel of the life of the people. Newspapers bring the affairs of the world to the knowledge of the people, and, unless polluted by race animosity, should prove an important aid to good government. Postal and telegraphic communications enable the people to gain intelligence of their absent friends and relatives living in distant lands, and the raiyat at home to keep touch with his kinsman in Natal, or Burma, or Trinidad, or anywhere else, and to receive remittances from them. The traveller by road is safe from thugs and dacoits, and serais do not now require inscriptions in stone, warning travellers not to take food from strangers. The reign of might has given place to the reign of law. But where can the list end? Turn where one will, the conditions of life in India have undergone a change that only those who know the country can take fully into account.

FINIS.

E J. H.—Reg. No. 6054J—400—18-8-94.